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HEATHEN AND HOLY LANDS:

OR,

SUNNY DAYS ON THE SALWEEN, NILE, AND JORDAN.

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BY CAPTAIN J. P. BRIGGS,

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER TENASSERIM AND MARTABAN PROVINCES,
CHARGE OF PROVINCE TAVOY.

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PREFACE.

UNLIKE most British travellers, with whom it is customary to commence the record of their wanderings while the white cliffs of Old England are fading in the distance, I have preferred to take a hint from the Horatian maxim, *in medias res*; and, as a consequence, my book commences where some may be of opinion it ought to end, to wit, in the antipodean lands of Tavoy.

As an unpractised writer, I may be permitted to deprecate a too severe criticism, so far as relates to style. I have but to offer the public a light sketch of the distant countries with which I am acquainted, sent forth at the request of those who ask for a perusal of my carelessly scribbled manuscript; its pages, however, were freshly penned while the scenes described, with all their natural beauties and defects, lay in a broad landscape before me, and accordingly I am not without hope that my simple narrative may

yield some amusement to those whose lot is cast in peaceful life at home, for whom, nevertheless, the wild but enticing spirit of adventure may have especial attractions.

To many others, the contrasted feelings excited by observations made in "Heathen and Holy Lands," thus brought into juxta-position, may be a new source of gratified interest; and, finally, I would fain trust that some who have travelled through these scenes before me, may find in the perusal of my simple narrative the inexpressible pleasure that usually attends the revival of long past, and, it may be, almost forgotten enjoyments. The realization of these hopes is all I anticipate, and their fulfilment will be for me, unversed as I am in the art of authorship, an ample success.

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ERRATA.

Page	17,	line	7,	*for*	"Sanatorium," *read* "Sanatarium."
„	22,	„	25,	„	"Edolins," *read* "Edolius."
„	41,	„	3,	„	"Yoora," *read* "Yoong."
„	105,	„	7,	„	"Twikhla," *read* "Trockhla."
„	105,	„	18,	„	"Thorgyees," *read* "Thoogyees."
„	113,	„	23,	„	"Huime-loongyee," *read* "Hmine-loongyee."
„	137,	„	25,	„	"Forty thousand," *read* "Four hundred thousand."
„	142,	„	1,	„	"Gezeerak-el-Yahood," *read* "Gezeerah-el-Yahood."

HEATHEN AND HOLY LANDS,

ETC. ETC.

PART I.

HEATHEN AND HOLY LANDS,

ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER I.

TAVOY AND THE TENASSERIM PROVINCES.

Antiquity of Tavoy — Bird's-eye View of the Country — Its Population — Capital — Picturesque Costume — Province Amherst — Taliens, and other Inhabitants — Women of the Province — Public Works — Jurisdiction and Government — Native Courts — Revenue — Imports and Exports — Timber Duty — Floating down the Stream — Government Forests — Climate — Fall of Rain — Geology — Quartz — Felspar — Salarite — Limestone — Galena and the Precious Metals — Trees and Flowers — Amherstia Nobilis — The Mesua — The Palm — Variety of Timber Trees — Zoology — Wild Animals — The Qway-ta-weh-weh-ta-weh — Birds — Natural Productions — Grain Crops, &c.

TAVOY, the subject of the first portion of this volume, may be introduced to the reader as one of the most beautiful little provinces of our Indian Empire. If its ancient historical traditions are true, it was a

flourishing colony about B. C. 55, when the ancient Britons were disputing the landing of the Roman legions on their shore; and an independent kingdom in 1066, when brave King Harold fought for the throne of England with William of Normandy. It is separated from Siam by a high mountain range, at the foot of which flows the river Tenasserim, while its bold, often precipitous western shore is washed by the Indian Ocean.

Sailing along this coast, nothing can be more beautiful than the ever-green foliage of the gigantic trees, compared with which our largest oaks are mere pigmies. No scene more attractive can be conceived, no leisure hour more pleasantly spent, than when, at early dawn, reclining on the deck of a tall-sparred little schooner, with just enough of the morning breeze to fill her lightest canvas, cool and scented it gently approaches from the spice-bearing shore, just sufficient to raise a gentle ripple on the calm clear water. The outline of the mountainous mainland shows bold and distinct on the bright morning sky; but light silvery clouds still slumber over the numerous islets; and as the rising sun gradually dispels the shadowy vapours, out bursts the sharp outline of a perpendicular blackened rock. Though cleft down the centre by some awful subterraneous shock, it still rears its

double-pointed crest high o'er the deep blue water, that has during many ages excavated in its base lofty caverns, where the sea-swallow builds her edible nest; and again, as the morning mist is dispersed, isle after isle appears; some low, and clad in dark-green foliage to the very margin of the rock-bound shore, relieved here and there by a white sandy bay, where turtle abound: others rising so steep and high from the water's edge, that the tall forest on the summit glitters in the early sunbeam, while the mist still shrouds the rocky base.

The breeze freshens as we proceed, and the light bark flies before it; green island, white bay, and tall headland, are passed; and as the evening falls, she glides between the Point—a high promontory, marked with white spiral pagodas on its summit—and the Cap—an isle so called from its peculiar round cap-like shape—and we enter the Tavoy river, on which, in latitude 14° 8′ north, the town of Tavoy is itself situated.

All the alluvium and rich land along its banks, and from the brink of its numerous tributaries, stretching back to where the high land commences, is occupied by flourishing villages, surrounded by fruit and vegetable gardens, with here and there a wide expanse of luxuriant rice fields. Beyond these

plains, a short ascent conducts the traveller on to the table-lands, which are densely covered with vegetation. Tree and bush are here profusely tangled with high grass, wild flowers, and numerous creepers; except where clearings have been made for the cultivation of the mangosteen, the doorian, or various palms, growing luxuriantly midst pine-apple, cucumber, or melon beds.

Ascend still further to the summit of a neighbouring hill, and look land-ways; 'hill o'er hill, mountain o'er mountain, clothed in wide-spreading forest, meet the eye, right away into Central Asia, far as sight can reach, save where the Karen or hardy mountaineer has felled small dotted spots of the giant forest to rear his favourite betel-nut, a few pumpkins, or scanty crop of mountain rice. Such is the general picture presented to the eye on approaching Tavoy, and on taking a bird's-eye view of its immediate neighbourhood.

The province thus described contains about 12,000 square miles of territory, with a population somewhat exceeding 50,000 souls, the greater part of whom are Budhists. They speak the Burmese language, and are of Mongolian race, of the same type as the Burmese, to whom they were subject for upwards of half a century before the British occupa-

tion of the Tenasserim provinces, of which Tavoy forms the centre.

The principal town of the Tenasserim provinces is Moulmein, beautifully situated on the river *Salween*; whose surrounding hills are clad with everlasting green, and surmounted with symmetrical spiral gold-tipped pagodas. The magnificent natural scenery of this river is further enhanced by the numerous vessels, from farthest East and West, which float on its broad stream. Here may be seen the tall-masted, neatly-rigged American clipper, alongside of the dirty, clumsy "doony" from the eastern coast of Hindoostan: the lofty British merchantman, and the goggle-eyed junk from the celestial shores, with gaudy colours staring even an Asiatic sun out of countenance; and there rides the little war steamer, with the Honourable Company's flag flying: and not a more taut or cleaner vessel floats than the "Pluto." Along shore, from vessel to vessel, plies the Burman's swift canoe, urged through the stream with the greatest rapidity, though the only moving power is the light paddle held in the tiny hand of a Burmese girl.

With few exceptions the houses in the town of Moulmein are built of wood, and raised several feet from the ground. They certainly do not make much

show, except where roof piled high on roof, with most elaborate carving, marks the Budhist monastery; but they are generally neatly finished, and almost always cool and comfortable.

Nothing can be more gay and picturesque than the crowd that collects around the morning bazaar, where all kinds of Eastern fruit and vegetables, fish and fowl, European hardware and cotton stuffs, are sold. Both men and women here disport themselves in home-spun silks of gayest colours; while the latter, wearing in addition a plain white jacket, with fresh rose or wild-flower in their glossy black hair, assume an air of simple coquetry that cannot fail to attract and please the eye of a stranger.

While these troop along, some two hundred little hack carriages, drawn by small shaggy-maned ponies, dash about in their own and everybody's way; and merry peals of laughter always denote a Burmese crowd. The bright, dazzling sun looks down on all, and his rays are happily tempered by the cool sea breeze, that assists to make the climate one of the most healthful in the world.

Amherst forms the chief or principal province of what are termed the Tenasserim provinces, so called from the river of that name, which forms part of their south-eastern boundary. The geographical area

of the whole is comprised between 97° 37′ and 99° 36′ east longitude, and extends in latitude from 10° north to 17° 51′. Province Amherst alone covers about 24,000 square miles, only 108,664 acres of which is under cultivation; the greater portion running up into high mountain summits, alternating with deep rocky valleys, or expanding broadly on tracts of wild forest scenery. The population, as the figures I shall immediately cite will show, is so small for the extent of country, that the price of labour is high; and only the rich alluvium on the banks of the rivers will yield a crop that repays the agriculturist for the labour expended.

The two principal towns in Province Amherst are Moulmein and Amherst, the former containing about 43,000 inhabitants, the latter about 5,484, of whom 300 are Europeans or Eurasians. According to a census taken in 1856, the entire population of the province, including the towns, was 128,442 souls, consisting principally of Moans or Taliens, Burmese and Karens. The "Moans," or, as they are called by the Burmese, "Taliens," form by far the larger portion of the population, and like the Burmese, are of Mongolian race, and Budhists in religious belief. They wear the same dress as the Burmese, and have like manners and customs, but speak a totally different

language, differing almost in every word, totally different in combination of words and sentences, and in the idiom. The Burmese language is labial and soft as the Italian, the Talien harsh and guttural as Arabic; yet they are both monosyllabic; and, with few exceptions, they have the same written character.

The Taliens are not the aboriginal race. It is not known when they migrated from the vast plains of Central Asia; but beyond a doubt, they, as well as the Burmese and Tavoyers, wandered forth from Mongolia, and have occupied the soil for many centuries. Their last Talien king, "Benga Dellah," reigned about a hundred years ago, from Ava to Siam; they were conquered by the Burmese under "Alomphara," ninety-eight years ago; and hailed the British conquest in 1825 as a great deliverance, and have ever proved most loyal subjects. Like the Burmese, with whom they now intermix and marry, they are a happy and contented race, and are really well off. They are better fed and clothed, have larger, more airy and healthful houses, and a larger proportion of them (including men and women) can read and write than the great masses of the population of Europe. They form the most picturesque groups in a crowd imaginable, exceeding any I have witnessed even in

Syria, Italy, or Turkey. The women are fair for Asiatics. Their long black tresses, carefully dressed, are arranged à la Madonna, and adorned with fresh flowers, usually the rose, the chumpac, or the Amherstia. The "tumien," or petticoat, is from the native loom, woven of silk of the brightest dye and of varied hues, the pattern often fantastic, but the colours always blended with the greatest taste. The folds over the breast are usually of Turkey red, and the neat little white or pink lace or velvet jacket is of British manufacture.

The men are short, but well made and active. They wear their hair long and neatly dressed, forming with a piece of muslin or gay silk handkerchief intertwined with it, a very showy turban; the jacket, usually of British stuff, hangs loosely from the shoulders over the hips; and the silk "putso," of gayest tartan, or brightest-coloured silk, woven by the Burmese women in the ever varying designs which betray their capricious fancy, is arranged in the fashion of a Highlander's kilt, with one large flowing end thrown jauntily over the shoulder. They are as unshackled as ourselves with caste, and differ from Mahomedans and most Asiatics in being so light-hearted and merry in natural disposition.

During the last fifteen years, large sums of money, and the constant labour of upwards of a thousand convicts, have been expended in the Tenasserim provinces, on public works. The town of Moulmein can now boast of a neat little wooden church, extensive barracks, two capacious brick and mortar buildings for courts and civil offices, a gaol, two wharves, and twenty-five miles of good macadamized road, well bridged, within the town itself and in its vicinity. As for the country at large, it is so well intersected by magnificent streams — the Salween, Attaran, Gyen, and Thoungyeen — and the population, as remarked above, is so limited for the area (only the banks of these streams being populated), that anything more extensive than the present bridle-paths leading from village to village, would only prove the occasion of an uncalled-for and unprofitable expenditure.

The lower courts of original jurisdiction, presided over by Tseetkays and Goung Gyoups (the office of a Tseetkay answering to that of Moonsiff in Bengal), receive all civil suits in the towns up to 250 rs., an appeal lying to the Deputy Commissioner. They usually are, and I would submit ought always to be, presided over by natives of the province. The Goung Gyoups — literally, heads of districts into

which the provinces are divided — take cognizance of all suits arising within their several jurisdictions; but if the amount sued for be large, or the crime heinous,—exceeding in the one case a petty plaint, or in the other a simple act of larceny,—it is at once referred to the Deputy Commissioner in charge of the province.

The higher courts of original jurisdiction are, accordingly, those of Deputy Commissioners and Assistant Commissioners; the Deputy Commissioner being also revenue collector and district magistrate. Having appellate jurisdiction, he receives only original cases in which extensive interests are at stake. The Assistant Commissioner receives all ordinary civil suits for the recovery of larger sums than 250 rupees, originating within the town or subdivision of which he has charge.

A final appeal lies from the deputies and all the other courts to the Commissioner, whose court is the Senior Appellate and Sessions Court of the Tenasserim Provinces. The proceedings in all the senior courts are recorded in English by the judge in person.

The mode of procedure at law is so simple, that any educated person may conduct his case in court, without the assistance of an attorney or

advocate. The plaintiff makes a verbal statement, or files a short written plaint, upon which the court issues the summons requiring the attendance of the defendant, who either makes a verbal answer, which is recorded by the judge, or files a written one. If necessary, the court then fixes the point at issue between the parties, and issues subpœnas for all the witnesses to attend on a given day, when their depositions are taken in English, the points of law or evidence argued, and the case disposed of at once. The English law is administered to Europeans, *and whenever* applicable. Suits between Burmese regarding marriage, divorce, and inheritance are decided according to Burmese law. The administration of law in these courts is most satisfactory; for although the officers on the bench have not been "bred to law," and are liable to error, an appeal to a higher court is always available; and I have heard several of the most intelligent British merchants, with thousands of rupees at stake, declare that they preferred this concise, simple, but practical procedure, to the tedious and expensive proceedings necessary to get possession of simply *one's rights* in the law courts of England.

Petty criminal cases are decided much in the same way; but the perpetrators of all serious crimes are

brought up direct to the officer in charge of the district, or if in the town, to the town magistrate, who in person takes down in writing all statements, confessions, and depositions, according to the form required in British law. After the defence has been heard and recorded, if the offence should not demand a more severe punishment than three years' imprisonment with labour in irons, sentence is at once passed, with a right of appeal by the prisoner; but if the crime be of such a heinous nature as to require it, the prisoner is committed to take his trial before the Sessions Court, where he has the benefit of a trial by jury.

The total demand and collection of revenue of province Amherst for the official year 1856-57, amounted to 8,11,569 rs., or eighty-one thousand pounds sterling; of which the sum of 172,053 rs. was from land (in all little more than two lacs from direct taxation). The duty on timber yields 2,39,000 rs.; and sea customs, after deducting expenses of collection, 78,390 rs.; marine, 49,161 rs.; excise, 150,627 rs.; miscellaneous, 2,237 rs.; besides other items. The total collection from province Tavoy for the same year was 126,710 rs.; the larger portion of which was from land revenue. To judge from the facility with which the revenue is collected, and

the general contentment of the people, they certainly do not appear to be too heavily burdened. The aggregate cultivated land pays a fraction over one rupee an acre per annum, and yields probably from ten to fifteen, or even twenty, rupees per acre; in a few extreme cases, perhaps, it may be less, or sometimes a little more.

The most important item in the trade of these provinces is teak timber. During the official year 1856-57, 42,326 tons, valued at 20,70,571 rs., were exported; and the returns for next year will probably show a considerable increase. The timber duty for the same year has been collected on 80,479 logs, or pieces of teak timber brought down by foresters from the banks of the Salween, Thoungyeen, and Attaran rivers, having increased to that number from 73,436 logs in the year 1854-5. There is still a considerable quantity of teak timber within province Amherst; but the best trees have been felled, and the greater portion comes now from foreign territory—either the Siamese bank of the Thoungyeen, or the banks and tributaries of the Salween beyond our boundary.

A brief sketch of the mode of bringing timber to the market will not be without its interest. The selected trees are killed, by cutting off a ring of the bark, from that part of the boll near the

ground, and about one foot in breadth. The year following they are felled, and dragged by elephants into the bed of the river, or one of its tributary streams. During the south-west monsoon, when the waters rise, the timber is often abandoned to the current, and will sometimes float more than two hundred miles, to a station called Kyodan, where a cable is stretched across the river, and where the foresters watch for it, easily recognising their own timber by the marks stamped on it in the forest. Here they tow each enormous log to the shore, raft it, and float it down to the timber revenue station at Kado, where it must be deposited, entered on the revenue books, and duty paid, before it can be cleared out and taken to the saw-pit at Moulmein. The duty now charged is at the rate of from two rupees twelve annas per log, to four annas per ship's crook.

It is a most exciting scene to stand at Kyodan, where the river is narrowed, between two perpendicular mountain precipices, to a third of its natural breadth; and where, as a consequence, the clear blue waters run swiftly on their course. Here an immense cable is stretched from the bank on one side to a rock close by the opposite shore, which intercepts the floating logs, and in course of the night collects them in large quantities. At early

dawn the foresters assemble to their work, and may be seen scrambling over the pile, diving, swimming, and shouting with laughter as some unstable log precipitates one of the greener hands into the water. It is the business of each man to select his own timber, and paddle it to shore clear of the collected mass; but sometimes the weight of timber is so great that the cable snaps, and the entire bulk goes crashing along the resistless stream to be stranded where the current guides it, or saved by people who make it their employment, and receive from one rupee to three rupees a log salvage; much of it, however, is often lost by being carried out to sea, or stranded on unfrequented islands. Besides the timber exported, 132 vessels have been built at Moulmein, from the 50-ton schooner to the 1,400-ton ship. Even a screw steam-frigate has been built here, measuring 1,300 tons. This vessel, I believe, is regarded as one of the finest of her class in her Majesty's Navy.

There are also what are called the Government forests, under the charge of a conservator, in which the timber is felled and dragged at the Government expense, and sold to the highest bidder. Although this plan has not been, on the whole, a profitable one, the department has raised a nursery of about

20,000 young trees, 10,000 of which have been planted out.

The climate of these provinces is remarkably good, and we may fairly pronounce them the most healthy part of our British Indian Empire. The town of Amherst, on the open sea-beach, would make an easily accessible and delightful sanatorium for Calcutta. Good unfurnished houses are to be hired there now; and there is a resident physician, of much professional ability.

The range of the thermometer at Moulmein, for nine months of the year, is from 62° to 86° in the shade, and though, in March, it sometimes rises to 90° or 91°, there is, at that period of the year, a cool, healthy sea breeze, by which the heat is tempered. The climate, unlike that of the greater part of India, is moist, and the luxuriant foliage is green throughout the year. The fall of rain averages 156 inches per annum at Moulmein, and nearly 200 inches at Tavoy.

The geology of these provinces is interesting. At Amherst, the tertiary formation lies upon the transition or mountain limestone, which here and there crops out in sharp pinnacled and pointed rocks rising to several hundred feet perpendicularly from the plain. No coal, so far as is yet known, intervenes,

but it is found of good quality at Mergui, the most southern district of the provinces. We have also ranges of hill composed of calcareous sandstone; with a rich alluvium on the banks of the large streams, particularly the islands formed of the alluvial deposits where the rivers debouch. Along the coast from Amherst town to Yê, there is a broken chain of coarse granite, composed of quartz, mica, and felspar. At the mouth of the Tavoy river, I have found granite containing pinkish-coloured felspar, remarkable for its hardness and its property of resisting exposure to the weather without disintegration; it also exists in a mountainous range in the north-east of the province, and was taken by Dr. Helfer for syenite; but it is much coarser, and differs much from a specimen I brought from Syene in Upper Egypt. Laterite is found all over the provinces, alternating with sandstone; it is on the coast both at Moulmein and Tavoy, and may be seen stratified at the base of the north-eastern mountains; there is usually a thin crust of soil, the result of decomposed vegetation, over it, but in some places it crops out in enormous boulders of blackened rock, hard as flint from exposure to the atmosphere. With diffidence I would attribute the salubrity of the province in a great measure to this formation; for

it drains off, or rather, from being very porous, it absorbs, without delay all the superabundant moisture, which, if allowed to remain, would decompose the very abundant tropical vegetation, and produce a malignant malaria.

There are thermal springs on the Tenasserim and Attaran rivers, that are easily accessible, and may yet be found very valuable on account of their medical properties. The water rises from the mountain limestone; it deposits a tufa of carbonate of lime, and is strongly impregnated with iron. The temperature of the springs, as an average, may be stated at 130° Fahrenheit.

We have already mentioned the precipitous limestone formation of province Amherst. Close to Moulmein, these mountains rise perpendicularly to a great height from level plains of alluvium, and are rugged in the extreme, their outlines often forming strangely fanciful features in the scenery. They are perforated in many places with natural caves. One I remember of great extent with gigantic stalagmites raising their hoary heads from the ground, and wooing, in grandeur, but with cold stony approach, the beautiful slender stalactites suspended from the roof.

This limestone contains frequently sulphuret of

lead, or galena, in considerable quantities. The ore contains silver, and a specimen sent to Britain for analysis was considered a very valuable metal. The richest vein of this argentiferous galena here known is in the valley of the Salween.

Tin of a very fine quality is found in the province of Tavoy; from Henzay Bay some fifteen tons are exported annually, the proceeds of a few poor villagers washing the sandy deposit of a small stream. It is known to be very abundant, but no shaft, or excavation, deserving the name has been sunk by us, though I have come on numerous cuttings where it has been worked perhaps centuries ago. As tin in the home market is rapidly advancing in price, and is likely to be in still greater demand, the produce of these mines may soon attract more attention. Silver, copper, manganese, and agate have all been discovered in these provinces; and good coal (as before mentioned) has been worked to a small extent near Mergui.

Perhaps no country in the world produces a greater variety of flowering trees and plants, remarkable for beauty. In the first rank must be placed the "Amherstia Nobilis," which was first discovered on the banks of the Salween, and is supposed to be indigenous, though it is not found

growing wild: nothing can be more beautiful than its long pendent foliage, like silken tresses; nothing more splendid than its graceful blossom of scarlet and gold. We have also its sister the Jonesia, and the symmetrical "Mesua," with the highly-scented Chumpac, so famed in Oriental song. We have twelve different palms, I think, and the most beautiful Orchids adorn the old forest trees.

Of timber trees, the most valuable is of course the teak (*Teetona grandis*), of which there are many fine forests still extant, though they have been carelessly, even recklessly, worked in many instances. Iron wood (*Acacia xylocarpa*) is plentiful, and though too heavy for most purposes, is the most durable timber known; and, amongst others, the "Anan" (*Fagrea fragrans*), "Koung Moo" (*A. shorea*), and "Thengan" (*Hopea odorata*), are the most valuable indigenous timber trees.

Mammalia in the wild state abound here. Of *Pachydermata*, or thick-skinned animals, we have the wild elephant, the single and double-horned rhinoceros, the Malay tapir, and wild hog. Among the more remarkable carnivorous animals are the tiger and leopard. We have the black bear, with short hair (*Ursus Malayanus*), and also a hill bear, locally termed "Loowon," with long hair: and an

extraordinary animal (a living specimen of which I obtained lately), vulgarly termed Qway-ta-weh-weh-ta-weh: *Anglice,* half dog, half pig. Its shaggy black hair and piercing eyes would startle, at first sight, the bravest forest ranger.

There are five or more species of the monkey tribe, including the gibbon; eleven species of *Ruminantia,* including six deer; and two of wild cattle, one a very handsome animal, resembling the bison (*Bison gauras, Ham. Smith*), and a wild ox, often red and white, like an English cow (*Bos sondaicus*). The domestic buffalo, it may here be remarked, attains a very great size and weight, though I do not think the animal is indigenous to the country.

I have succeeded in making an interesting collection of specimens of the ornithology of this corner of the globe. The *Raptores* are very numerously represented; I have collected specimens at different times of twenty or more species, some very handsome hawks amongst them; thirty species have been identified.

Of the *Dentirostres,* or birds with a tooth on their upper mandible, we have the sweet-toned paradise edolins, and many forest songsters. Among the most common, but most extraordinary-looking deni-

zens of the forest, are three or four species of the horn-bill (*Bucoros*); of these the *Bucoros cavatus* has a most remarkable and enormous bill. The *Scansores* are well represented, more particularly in several species of cuckoos, woodpeckers, and barbets.

Among the *Fisserostres*, or wide-mouthed birds, we have some magnificent kingfishers; five species of which I have shot. But the most curious of the wide-mouthed birds in its habits, and the use to which it is put, is the edible nest or sea swallow (*Hirundo esculenta*). This bird inhabits the little rocky islands on the coast, which are farmed to the Chinese at Tavoy, for the sake of the nests produced, for a considerable rent per annum.

Of gallinaceous birds, we have the green-necked peacock, far more handsome than the Indian bird; the hen having a tail and crest like the cock. A pheasant (*Euplocomus lineatus*) is very common. I have had a skin of the peacock pheasant brought to me (*Polyplectron chinguis*), and have met with the "Argus," and "fire-back" pheasants on the banks of the Tenasserim River. Jungle fowl (*gallus ferrugineus*) are very numerous; the species is much larger and finer than that of India. A small bush quail, with three toes (*Turin atrogutaris*), is very

common. There are five or perhaps six species of pigeons, and three of doves. As may be expected, where there is so much rain, the *Grallatores*, or waders abound. There are seven herons, and a bittern. The adjutant breeds close to Moulmein town, on the almost inaccessible limestone cliffs. I have myself obtained, at various times, both the eggs and the young birds. I have seen four varieties of cranes, one resembling the ibis of the Egyptians. Snipes are common; and there are several plovers, snippits, &c.

The *Natatores*, or swimming birds, are not so numerous, but there are three varieties of the wild duck; and a magnificent pelican is very frequently met with during the rains, on the banks of the rivers and on the inundated plains.

The principal cereal crop is rice, which forms the staple of the food of the people, and is cultivated in great variety; seven kinds are in common use, five of which are produced on the level wet plains, sown at the commencement of the south-west monsoon, and reaped during the north-west monsoon; and two are grown on the hills. After the jungle is cut and burnt, the cultivator dibbles small holes, a span apart, into each of which he drops two or three grains of paddy. But perhaps I had better here

close this chapter, in which I have endeavoured to give a fair idea of the statistics of the Tenasserim provinces, without being tedious, or accumulating too much of mere detail.

CHAPTER II.

EDUCATION AND RELIGION.

The Mongolian Race in Tavoy—Burmese, Taliens, and Karens—Karen Traditions—Their Wandering Habits—Primitive Manners—Worship of Fairies—Erection of Fairy Houses—Remarkable Prophecy—Dr. Judson and the American Missionaries—Results of Conversion—Karens contrasted with the Taliens and Burmese—Causes of their Easy Conversion—Pleasing Incident—Character and Influence of the Burmese Priests—Polygamy—Domestic Character—Native Schools—Poor Scholarships—The High School of Moulmein.

THERE are, as before stated, three distinct families of the human race inhabiting these provinces; viz.,

1st. "Myemma," or "Byemma:" Anglicized "Burman."

2nd. "Mon"—named by the Burmese "Talien."

3rd. "Karen"—termed by themselves *P'gha* (man). They all belong to the Tartar or Mongolian race; and the first two are Budhists. Their dress, character, and forms of religion being alike, and the Burmese language being the means of communication, the English commonly call them both Burmese; and a stranger, or careless observer, would not detect the difference.

The Karens appear to have ever been a wandering race—at least, as far back as they know themselves. They are a very different people in language, physiognomy, customs, and, in short, in every respect, from the Burmese and Taliens living in the same country with them. They were at first supposed to be the aborigines, and likely enough they are the earliest inhabitants of this country; but they also have their traditions of another country from which their forefathers migrated.

They still constantly wander about and change their place of residence, though the light of the Gospel, taught them by American Missionaries, together with easy taxes and an equitable Government, has induced many to settle down in thriving little village communities.

Even these settlements, though, are always liable to be broken up when the soil around them becomes exhausted. They will then, with all their women and children, and scanty household property, wander away to some well-watered upland slope, where the forest alone occupies the virgin soil. If it be a community still heathen, the old chief sacrifices a fowl, and carefully examines the bones in search of favourable omens. If successful, and the soil appears rich, they endeavour to propitiate the Fay

that they suppose to inhabit some large banyan tree, and preside over the locality.

The mountain rill, or spring, is also supposed to have its guardian nymphs. These spirits may be good or evil, but in either case, it is held to be necessary to conciliate them by erecting for each one, in some quiet secluded spot, a very neat little house, made of slips of bamboo and leaves, in which the young men and virgins of the community place their offerings of rice, fruit, or flowers. This was the only worship, the only religion, if it can be so termed, that they knew, until the arrival of the American Missionaries. They had an old tradition among them, that teachers would come from the far West, and instruct them in a pure religion that would raise them in the social scale high above the other neighbouring races that tyrannized over and oppressed them. Great and wonderful, accordingly, has been the success of the great leader, the Apostle of Burmah, as he has been fitly termed, Dr. Judson, and his able companions.

The missionaries have much and well-merited influence among the Karens, far greater than the British officers in civil charge of the provinces, and they have ever used it for the most legitimate and beneficial purposes. In my wanderings over the World,

I have met with no Mission that appeared to have done so much good with small means; and had they now sufficient funds to support village churches and Karen pastors, and in each hamlet a school where the young would be instructed in the Bible, and receive European knowledge, through the medium of their own tongue, the success that would accrue to the Christian cause can scarcely be estimated. Those in England who have vast wealth, would, I think, like to know how much good they have it in their power to do for the *great cause* that they must and do desire to assist.

The Burmese and Taliens, unlike the Karens, possess much of the ancient civilization of China and India. They have also had the advantage of a written language for an indefinite period, while the Karen was reduced to writing for the first time by the Protestant Missionaries of America, who accomplished their purpose by adopting the Burmese alphabet, with a few additions, to the Karen tongue. In this character, they printed a translation of the Bible, and many other books, and the happy result is that many thousands have learnt to read, and become on their own conviction true Christians.

Though much remains to be done, there is perhaps

no part of the world where missionary effort has been crowned with such complete success as among the Karen population.

The difference in prosperity and comfort between the Christian and heathen villages and districts, is most marked; and the check put to crimes of violence, by the teaching of Christianity, has been infinitely greater, than that which our courts of law, our regulated heads of villages and police, and the utmost endeavours of hard-working officers in civil charge of provinces, have been able to enforce. Heinous crime is almost unknown among the Christian Karens, while it is still of frequent occurrence among the heathen Karens.

In the Tenasserim Provinces there are upwards of two thousand Karen baptized Christians; and in Pegu, there are upwards of eleven thousand Karen converts; while their young families, growing up among them, educated by their parents in the Christian faith, and accustomed regularly to attend Divine worship in their villages, may be fairly estimated together, at not less than seventy-five thousand souls. There is surely something very striking in this, when we consider that it is only some twenty years since the Gospel was first preached to the Karens, by Missionaries specially

appointed to them; and, indeed, how very few Missionaries, among a small and widely-scattered population, have been employed in this work! There is, too, none of the humbug, "Bura purwastee," or "ap ka kooshee," about *these* converts, often, I fear, not without reason, attributed to heathen missions; but a striking independence of character and pride of faith, if I may use the term, that cannot be mistaken. Their conduct, and their actions, prove better than their speech, that their faith is always uppermost in their thoughts. There is among them an unmistakeable determination not only to speak out for their faith, but if need be, to do battle for it; and should the day of trial ever come to our trans-Gangetic provinces, as it has in India, these men will be found ranged on the side of order, ready to fight for Christianity and civilization.

As a Magistrate of upwards of eight years' experience on this coast, I can vouch for the great improvement in morality among the Christian Karens, and can affirm that ten Christian villages give less work to a police officer than one heathen Karen village. In Province Tavoy, the statistical records show that there is more crime in the one heathen village of Toungbyouk, than in the whole Christian district. These facts make it the more to be

regretted that there are still large districts of the country where the Gospel is unknown or disregarded.

The Missionaries have not been so successful among the Burmese and Taliens; the converts among them are comparatively very few, and I have met with still fewer whom I should consider *real* Christians; and these, for the most part, were converts to the Church of Rome, though more labour and time has been expended upon them than upon the Karens.

There are outward and evident reasons for this. The Taliens and Burmese have been in turn the conquering race; both have oppressed the Karens. The poor and oppressed take much more willingly to the Christian faith, than a vain, confident people. The former have both had for ages a religion, and one to which they were much attached. Besides their numerous moral precepts, the Budhist forms are certainly less barbarous, and purer than the Brahmin or Hindoo rites, while they are more attractive to the people than our simple forms of worship. The Karens, as before stated, had no religion of their own from which they require to be dissuaded, no leader of note to follow, no one to assist them in their frequent troubles. From their

retiring habits, which led them to frequent the mountains and forests, and shun the towns, and from a somewhat sullen manner, which contrasts unfavourably at first sight with the gay independence of the Burman character, they were also much neglected by the British officers. In addition to all these predisposing causes, there was also the old tradition before alluded to, that teachers would come from the far west, who would instruct them in the true religion, and raise them from the depth of oppression under which they suffered. Such influences, together with the earnest labours of the missionaries engaged in the work, are, under Providence, working wonders in a quiet unostentatious manner, scarcely known to the world at large. Brother Jonathan has taken the lead in this good work, and has shown us the way how to do it, as in several other affairs, and it is surely our duty to follow, assist, and encourage him in every way we can.

Upwards of two years ago, on my return to Province Tavoy, after a considerable absence on medical furlough, I found an uneasy, discontented feeling among the Karen Christian population, originating in an appointment, made by my *locum tenens*, of a Burman Goung Gyoup, or, head native revenue and civil

officer, over a district where the greater number of the people were Christians. In pursuance of what I esteemed my duty, I set off on a tour of inquiry in the district, and with a small party of followers, walked over the range of mountains that intersect the province, and on the second day reached the bank of the Tenasserim river, and there halted for a day. In the cool of the afternoon, I gave my rifle and hunting-belt to a favourite attendant, a little Burmese lad, to carry, for several descriptions of wild animals frequented the surrounding forest that no civilizing axe had yet touched, and taking a Karen to guide us through the pathless wood, we set out to visit a Karen hamlet near the junction of the Beng stream. Thus we wandered on, sometimes stopping to watch the gay-plumaged denizens of the wood, or listen to the ripple of the clear stream, winding its way between enormous blackened granite boulders; and to the coo of the large Imperial Pigeon, as the mild evening breeze rustled through the foliage and called all nature into life; until, as we passed a bend of the river, the distant sound of human voices singing a hymn fell upon the ear. It was Sunday evening, yet the sound was passing strange in such a place; the tune, too, was one of those old-fashioned little songs I had not heard for

ever so long a time. I listened for a few seconds with a look of wonder and inquiry towards the guide. "They are at their evening devotions," he said. We went on and reached the first building of a little village, consisting of a few bamboo and leaf houses, each half hid in its own garden: here, in a neat little shed, roofed with forest leaves, were collected the whole of the inhabitants, young and old, male and female, even little dots of children, *sans chemise*, all at evening service, conducted with the greatest propriety by one of the elders of the hamlet. These people were thirty miles distant from the missionary, who had not been able to visit them for a year; the meeting was spontaneous, and I learnt, regularly held in that and the neighbouring hamlets. Who can doubt that these were true and earnest Christians? I removed the Burman to another situation, and appointed a Christian Karen as head of the district, to the great satisfaction of the people, as well as, it afterwards proved, to the advantage of Government.

The Budhist belief, and the duty it requires, as well as the forms of worship, are too generally known to require description here. I may state, however, that the Burmese Budhist priests, as among all other Budhist populations, observe the law of celibacy, and live apart from the laity in monasteries. They are

generally moral in their conduct, and although their influence is great, they never interfere in any political matter. I know of no heathen priesthood whose behaviour is so unobjectionable, and who are so deserving of the attention and respect they receive from the laity; at the same time, they are not at all bigoted, and always make Europeans welcome at their monasteries. Several of the most clever among them have read portions of the Bible, and they have told me that it was a very good book, full of excellent precepts. They always allow missionaries to enter their monasteries, and will talk and argue quietly and amicably on religious subjects; but though very tolerant they have a great deal of self-reliance, and are not likely to be easily converted.

The European is on a much better footing with them, and the Burmese race generally, than with the natives of India, for they are as untrammelled with caste as ourselves, and are generous, open-hearted, and of very liberal ideas. Destitution is quite unknown among them. If a family should be in want, their neighbours will at once come forward and assist them. The stranger, of whatever creed, has never to ask twice for food; and I do not think in the whole province of Tavoy a man ever goes to sleep hungry.

As an essential point in a review of their religion

and morals, I may here state that polygamy is allowed among this people; but most have only one wife, and few more than two. The first, or head wife, is usually the choice of the husband in his youth; and when she ceases to have children, she often assists in the choice of a young wife, who is bound to obey her; for here, at least, children are still an assistance, not a burden to their parents. Marriage is simply a civil contract, which either party may dissolve on certain grounds, such as proved incompatibility of temper, or barrenness; the penalty, on the other hand, being that the dissatisfied party usually gives a dowry, or forfeits all personal effects to the other. The woman has equal civil rights with the man, and even a casual observer must remark fewer disputes and quarrels between man and wife than in any other community.

I have already passed a remark on the morality and influence of the Budhist priests, but they are also the ordinary schoolmasters of the country. They employ their leisure in teaching, gratuitously, the boys of the village, or division of the town, in the vicinity of their monastery, to read and write their native language; while women who have taken ascetic vows, or sometimes old widows, give similar instruction to the girls. The simple rudiments of

arithmetic are also taught in these schools, but beyond this the education of the laity seldom goes; a young man, however, who wishes to acquire the abstruse tenets of the Budhist creed, is boarded and lodged in the monastery for any time he may desire to prosecute his studies.

The English Government, I ought to remark, supports a high school in the town of Moulmein, where English is taught, with all the rudimental branches of education; and assists several missionary Karen and Burmese schools by grants in aid. Besides this, a comprehensive scheme for the diffusion of useful, practical, and modern knowledge among our Burmese fellow-subjects by means of village and high schools, where the vernacular tongue is to be the medium through which European learning is to be imparted, and English taught to those who have acquired a competent knowledge of their own written language, is now under consideration by the Supreme Government.

CHAPTER III.

CIVIL AND CRIMINAL ADMINISTRATION.

Adaptation of English Law—The Laws of Menoo—Simplicity of Legal procedure—Contrast with the System of Southern India and Bengal—English Judges and Courts highly esteemed—The Right of Appeal—Character of the usual Civil Suits—System of Land-rent—Example of a Suit for an Inheritance—Custom of Marriage—Perfect freedom of marriageable Girls—State of the Population—Tendency to Suicide—Remarkable Cases—Suicide of a betrothed Maiden—Suicide of a Bridegroom—Attempted Suicide of a little Girl—Crime in British Burmah—Remarkable discovery of Murder and Piracy—The Coco Islands—Consequences of a legal Quibble.

THE Tenasserim are what are termed Non-Regulation Provinces; that is, the law administered is not that of the Regulations and Acts of the Supreme Council of India, but a concise system founded on the principles of English law; and only where peculiar Burmese interests and ancient custom or usage are concerned, such as inheritance and marriage contracts, the most sensible and equitable portions of the "Damathat," or Laws of Menoo, according to the Burmese version, are admitted.

The procedure in the courts has the advantage of being concise, and within the comprehension of

all suitors. In southern India and Bengal, a very lengthy proceeding of frequently fabricated evidence is recorded by native writers, and read out to the judge, in the same monotonous tone, whatever the subject, seldom understood by the parties concerned, and difficult for the officer on the bench to keep his attention fixed so as to gather and sift the minutiæ of the evidence, even if he has so far comprehended the case as to be enabled to determine all the points at issue. Here, on the contrary, the officer on the bench personally records the plaint and answer, fixes the issues requiring proof, examines the witnesses direct, and writes down their depositions; he must, therefore, thoroughly understand the case, and the suitors have at least the advantage of a fair hearing, and an unbiassed decision to the best of the officer's judgment.

One of the advantages to the people of this system is, that the English judge, from constant practice, must obtain a fluent knowledge of their language; he is directly accessible to them, and is brought into personal communication with all classes. The labour to the judge is greatly increased, but he *must* work or break down at once. There can scarcely, I think, be two honest and sensible opinions as to which is the best system.

Our Burmese subjects appreciate our courts, and contrast them advantageously with the old Burmese "Yoora," where the longest purse usually gained the suit; but our plan of giving a right of cheap appeal through three courts, in every case, however petty or clear, is often felt to act unfairly; the right is allowed with the very best intentions, but it often enables an affluent debtor to keep an humble claimant, for an unnecessarily long period, out of his due.

The civil suits here are generally for land: to own a few acres of paddy land is the earnest desire of every Burman, and there are no large zemindars or talookdars. The peasants cultivate their own land, and pay the revenue direct to the Government officer, which is generally about one-fifth the value of the crop; but he knows exactly what he has to pay, and cannot be cheated. They always pay up the Government dues at once, and with apparent ease. I never had even to distrain property for arrears of revenue. This system is nearly identical with that which is called the "Ryotwarree" in India. Here it works well, and prevents the cultivator being oppressed, or becoming any one's slave, as is too often the case in the zemindaree assessment.

A plaint may be made verbally to the judge who records it, but it is more usually made in the form of a petition. A large percentage of cases are for share of inheritance, and puzzling enough some of them are. For instance: Shoay-Oo filed a petition, praying for a summons to cause Nga Oung and others to make restitution of the plaintiff's share of certain land, being his right, as joint-heir to his great-grandfather, who was the original owner, and who, during his lifetime, mortgaged it; but, after the great-grandfather's death, his widow redeemed it, married again, and had a second family. On the great-grandmother's death, plaintiff's grandfather's right, as joint-heir, was acknowledged, by his being allowed to till the land, and reap the proceeds, for ten years, without intermission; after which his grandfather's sister enjoyed it for five years, when the land returned into the possession of the great-grandmother's second family, consisting of three persons, who enjoyed it in turn; during which time plaintiff's father died, and was thus unable to claim his rights; and the children of the eldest daughter of the great-grandmother's second family, now in possession, had mortgaged it to the defendant, Nga Oung, for a term of twenty years, for the full value of the land, with agreement that the mortgagee shall

till and enjoy it, in lieu of interest for the money advanced. Primogeniture does not, in Burmese law, give an exclusive right to inherit, though the first-born's share of inheritance is greater than that of any other child. What share should the plaintiff get, or is he entitled to the inheritance at all?

Burmese girls are not married, by desire of their parents, at a very early age, as in India. I never knew of an instance in which a girl was married against her inclination, or in which the parents did more than advise her. A young woman is courted by her lover as with us, and is generally married between seventeen and nineteen, to a young man of about the same age, or a very little older; but they will sometimes not marry till five-and-twenty. It may here be stated that, as a race, the Burmese are generally very healthy; and idiotcy, and mal-formation of the body, are of unusually rare occurrence. Under a native government, exterminating wars prevented a rapid increase of population; indeed, latterly, it is probable that it was greatly diminished, by flights of fifty and sixty thousand people at a time out of the country, to escape the tyranny of a barbarous governor. The country therefore is still very thinly populated, but statistical returns show that there is a gradual and steady increase;

and large families, in Tavoy, at least, are common. They have very great affection for their children. I have noticed it more strongly marked than in any other race, without exception, and much respect is shown by children to their parents, and by young to old people. They have two respectful terms of address that are always used by the young to the middle-aged, and by both to the old.

They have a peculiar delicacy of feeling or dread of "shame," to use our translation of their expression, and, at the same time, disregard of life. The nature of this feeling will be better understood by the relation of a few cases with which I became acquainted in my official character.

At the time I was magistrate of the town of Moulmein, a respectable elderly woman, one morning, drove up to my house in a hack-carriage, and, rushing upstairs, without being announced, with most incoherent expressions and wild gestures, declared herself to be the murderess of her daughter, and implored me to come and save her. "Help! help! for her only child." In her excited state, I could elicit no particulars of what had happened; so, catching up my hat, I got into the carriage with her, and called to an attendant policeman to jump up behind, and we drove off at full speed to her

house. On arrival there, she led the way in haste up the steps, through the verandah and centre-room, and, with an hysterical shudder, pushed open the door of a bed-room and pointed in.

I entered; and in the dull light, the window-shutters being closed, I saw a lifeless form hanging to a beam of the low roof, suspended by the neck with a little French silk handkerchief; the feet touching the ground; with a quiet smile on what were still pretty features. It was the corpse of her daughter—quite warm, and flexible, but lifeless. I instantly raised her in my arms, so as to loosen the handkerchief; and, calling to my attendant to undo the simple knot, laid her on the bed, and despatched the policeman in the carriage for the civil surgeon, who speedily arrived, but too late to restore animation. An inquiry on the spot elicited the following circumstances:—

She was a high-spirited, somewhat wilful girl, of eighteen, and there had been for some time past a little love affair between her and a young Burman, who had proposed to her. Her parents, who had given an unwilling and tardy consent, continued to put difficulties in the way of their union; but her lover had visited her privately the previous evening, and in an evil moment had been admitted into the

house. The mother of the girl, having found this out, sharply upbraided her, and even struck her in the presence of their neighbours. The girl made no reply, but retired at once to her room; washed, and dressed herself in clean clothes; neatly fastened up her long hair; powdered her face and neck (a usual custom when the maidens of Burmah dress for a holiday); and in her little room, so lately the scene of the first and last secret interchange of vows, she committed suicide with a little silk neckerchief, that looked as if it would hardly serve to kill a fly.

One other of the many cases of suicide, for the most petty causes, that have come within my knowledge, is more peculiar still. Two young women, both much admired, resided near each other; and though a good-natured rivalry existed between them, they were great friends, and often used to meet together, and relate mutually their little conquests and girlish secrets. This occurred more particularly in the evening time at the well, where they met to draw water. Here they were wont to laugh and joke with one another on that most important of all subjects, which of them would be first married, and what sort of husbands they would get.

After a time one of these girls married a respectable good lad, a sawyer by occupation, and had been living in her husband's house but a few days, when her old companion with others paid her a friendly visit. Her husband was not present, and the visitors commenced teasng and joking with her about her husband:—

"Ah!" said they, "you are married first, but only to a sawyer! I would not marry a sawyer! much you have got by your good looks, and your family that looked so high!" The young wife good-naturedly joined in the laugh against herself, and did not think it necessary to maintain her husband's good qualities. So her thoughtless visitors began pitying her for not having made a better match. The husband, who was in the little garden at the back of the house, overheard all this, and was so annoyed at not being considered good enough for his pretty young wife, that he forthwith went away and hung himself on a tree.

These examples may be sufficient to show how very little they seem to think of sacrificing their lives; any momentary annoyance or whim furnishing them with sufficient cause. Opium is one of the means they usually employ. A girl of about thirteen years of age, being sent as usual by her

mother to sell oranges in the bazaar, met a little friend of the same age, and employed in the same manner. The market was not full, and the trade not sufficiently brisk to keep them employed, and the two good-for-nothings commenced gambling for the oranges, by playing odd and even with the small dried flowers attached to the fruit; one of them, as a natural consequence, losing a number of her oranges, and returning home to her mother without the computed number of coppers that the sale of the fruit ought to have realized. On learning that she had been gambling, her mother boxed her ears; on which the child instantly left the house, and purchased opium enough to poison two or three people, and swallowed it; she then returned to her mother, and quietly told her that she would never have the power to beat her again. The mother, greatly alarmed and in the wildest grief, hugging her child to her bosom, rushed off to the civil hospital, where the surgeon, being present, was enabled to save her life. Such occurrences are by no means rare. In all the larger towns the civil surgeons annually save numerous lives of people who thus attempt to commit suicide.

Heinous crime in the Burmese Provinces, that have been upwards of thirty years under British

rule, is now of comparatively rare occurrence, but every now and then some fearful murder shows how small the price at which human life is here valued. The following cold-blooded, cruel massacre and piracy will exemplify this, and the manner in which it was brought to light is probably more strange than any work of fiction ever written. It is a remarkable instance of the all-directing hand of Providence that so usually brings murder home to the perpetrator against all likelihood, even when every human means has been adopted to conceal it.

In June, 1856, the magistrate of Rangoon forwarded by a steamer to me at Tavoy one Nga Than Doong, a sailor, who accused seven Tavoy men, besides others, of murdering the crew of a Tavoy vessel, on the Coco Islands. On his arrival, and before he could be brought to me, Nga Than Doong very foolishly shouted out to the relations of the murdered men who flocked round him (for the vessel had long been missing) the names of the murderers, who instantly took to flight; but by dint of the most active measures, such as instantly sending off policemen on the different roads leading from the town, Peons to watch all the passes into the Siamese and Hill States, and calling out the young men of the neighbouring villages, the last man of

the seven in Tavoy was arrested on the fourth day, and all were safely lodged in gaol. They were captured and brought to me at once separately, and all made a voluntary statement, confessing their guilt; and from their recorded statements, and the deposition of the survivor, I am enabled to give the following concise narrative of the massacre:—

During the month of August, 1855, a vessel sailed from Tavoy for the uninhabited Coco Islands, commanded by Nga Shoay Boo; he touched at "Yê" for provisions, and reached Bŭndah Island, one of the above group, in October, 1855, and commenced collecting cocoa-nut kernel and "Bèche de Mer" for a cargo; the cocoa-nut tree grows wild in large quantities on the islands.

Two days after their arrival another vessel came from Moulmein, commanded by Nga Tsein, a native of Tavoy, and son of the public executioner of the late Burmese Government. It appeared probable that there was on his arrival some little dispute between him and Nga Shoay Boo, as to the right to gather cocoa-nuts on the island, as there was not considered sufficient to load both junks; and there was an old established custom that the first arrival of the season should load before any other commenced. However, no open rupture occurred; they resided together for

nearly a month in outward show of peace and amity.

One day, when Nga Shoay Boo's boatmen were scattered at work, five collecting nuts on the island of Bundah, one in their temporary hut cooking, and four with their captain fishing for sea-slug on a small neighbouring island called "Wah" (or Bamboo Island), Nga Tsein, with all his boatmen except an old cook, suddenly attacked the five on Bundah with muskets, swords and clubs, so unexpectedly that they murdered the whole without resistance, and sinking the dead bodies in the sea, returned to their hut on the beach where their vessels lay, close to which was the hut of the other boatmen, where they found the cook. This unfortunate they knocked down with an iron rod, and having fastened his hands behind his back, threw him into the sea.

The wretches then ate the food that had been prepared for their victims, and passed the night in their hut. Next morning, Nga Shoay Boo and his remaining four men being still on "Wah" island, ignorant of what had occurred, Nga Tsein and his party went in search, and found them unarmed and busy fishing for "Bèche de Mer," up to their waists in water. They attacked them suddenly, and shot two, at the same moment that the captain and two

remaining men took to the sea, swimming. The captain and one of the men soon losing strength, returned to the shore, where they were instantly butchered, while landing, tired and helpless. The remaining man, Nga Than Doong, seeing this, and being a strong swimmer, went out to sea, which was at the time rough; and as he lay floating on his back the murderers on shore seem to have lost sight of him, and thought him drowned. They watched by the shore till night fell, and then went away.

But the Burmese are almost amphibious, and far on in the night, this last man of the crew of the Tavoy vessel landed, and threw himself on the beach by the cold corpse of his companion, weary and fainting from exhaustion; and rising early the following morning, cautiously proceeded to a small hut they had erected on "Wah" island. The murderers had visited the place, ransacked it of everything, and left; the survivor, however, searching diligently about, found a broken knife, which enabled him to procure food by opening cocoa-nuts and shell-fish.

The following day, early in the morning, he swam back to Bundah Island, described as nearly a mile distant, and hiding himself in the dense jungle, watched the other boat's crew, who had in the mean time taken possession of all the cocoa-nut kernel and

"Bèche de Mer" collected, and had burnt the Tavoy junk, and the whole of the property of the murdered crew. "They remained upwards of four months longer on the island, collecting cocoa-nut kernel, to obtain entire possession of which they had committed a crime so abhorrent; and during the whole of this period Nga Than Doong continued to live hid on the same island, sustaining himself on cocoa-nuts, the milk of which he drank, fearing to venture to the only spring of fresh water which was close to the hut of the piratical boatmen; burning with a thirst that can only be imagined, that no language could adequately describe, he dared not approach that clear, bubbling fountain, lest his foot-print on the morning dew should lead the hell-hounds to his retreat. At length, when the pirates had loaded their junk, they set sail for Moulmein, little dreaming that they had left behind them a witness of their foul crime. Nga Than Doong, now left alone, wandered round the island, and found a small canoe. To go to sea in it he deemed impossible; but when nearly hopeless, it enabled him to cross safely over again to the smaller island of "Wah." Here he had a singular dream. Lying asleep on the beach, helpless and weary, exhaustion of the frame and mind doubtless induced a gloomy foreboding, that was suddenly dis-

pelled by his imagination portraying in a fanciful vision food and assistance if he exerted himself to examine the island. He rose refreshed and inspirited, recommenced his late hopeless search, and found an old canoe of considerable size, which, with much labour he got into the water, and returned in it to Bundah island, where he set to work and repaired the boat, and with his broken knife made a mast and an oar to steer with, and stretched a sail on the mast made of some rags left behind by the other boatmen. He then shipped between 300 and 400 cocoa-nuts for food; and, at the expiration of about a month from the date he had been left alone, he fearlessly put to sea in his frail bark, and steered "for the rising sun," in which direction his home lay.

It was now the middle of May, the monsoon was commencing, the south-west wind blew strong, the sea rose high, with storms of rain at intervals; but for eighteen days our poor castaway sat in the bottom of his scooped tree, and baled the water out as it washed in, and driving before the wind, he steered with his oar when the weather would permit. On the eighteenth day he was picked up by a Chinese junk bound for Bassein, but which, from stress of weather, put into Rangoon. Nga Than Doong came on to Moulmein in the Calcutta steamer, and reached

Tavoy, his home, in the steam-vessel *Pluto*, to the terror and discomfiture of Nga Tsein and his inhuman crew.

Nga Tsein, and six of his crew, who resided in Province Tavoy, when captured, and in irons, were with some difficulty preserved from the mob, mingled with whom were the wives and families of the murdered men, who all belonged to this port. I believe they would have torn him limb from limb if they could have got hold of him. Five of the piratical crew, and I believe the worst, belonged to Burmah Proper, and were never arrested.

I proceeded to Calcutta with the prisoners, and assisted to conduct the trial before the Admiralty side of the Supreme Court; and though there was but the one solitary witness, we got the grand jury to find a true bill, and through the very talented exertions of the Advocate-General, an English jury found them guilty of murder. After all, I regret to add, these wretches were turned loose upon society by a legal quibble, it being held in England that the Calcutta Supreme Court had no jurisdiction on the Coco Islands, they never having been annexed to the Indian empire.

A remedy for this state of the law, as regards these islands, is loudly called for. I am inclined to

think it probable that this is not an exceptional or single instance of murder and piracy on these uninhabited islands. I have heard numerous though vague rumours, indeed, of such cases before; and we all know that many a boat or junk that leaves this coast is never again heard of.

CHAPTER IV.

NATIONAL FESTIVALS.

Annual Festivals in October — Boat-races—Peculiarity of the Boats—Mode of rowing—Gaiety of the preparations for the Fête—Richly spread Tables—Display of Silk and Gold—Happiness of the People—The Privileges of Women—Novelty of the Winning Post—Seizing the Palm—Vaunting Choruses—Subscription Purses—Universality of Gambling—Anecdote of Betting—Winning a Bride—The Day after the Races—Festival Rafts—Shen Mootee—Materials of a Burmese Banquet—Rice—Fish, Fowl, Venison, &c.—The Edible Swallow's Nest—The Dessert—Remarkable Fruits—The Doorian—Singular Prejudices—Story of the Forbidden Fruit—Worship at the Budhist Shrine—The Figure of Godama — Site of the Temples and Monasteries—The Return Home.

THE most manly and best national sport among the inhabitants of the Tenasserim Provinces is boat-racing; it takes place annually at the full of the moon, "Thadengyo," corresponding with our month of October. This is the middle of the Burmese year, and some of the principal holidays are then held.

The Burmese are clannish in their feelings; one division of the town races against another, one village against another village. Whatever the amuse-

ment, ceremony, or dispute, one section is sure to be found pitted against another. Thus, each has its respective racing boats, which differ much in form or build from the boats in common use. They are of great length, constructed of a single tree scooped out, and the sides extended, and the whole straightened by the application of heat. On either side is fixed a gunwale, consisting of a single plank. These boats are very gaily painted and neatly finished, with a slightly peaked bow and stern; some are made to contain from forty to sixty men and even more, but their usual number is from twenty to thirty, who all sit facing the bow. They do not row, in our sense of the word, but paddle, throwing the water with a jerk high into the air, and keeping time by a chorus in which all join. The speed thus attained, for a short distance, is remarkably good; for half a mile or so I do not know of any boat or vessel that would pass them; but such rapid paddling cannot be sustained for any length of time; the course is usually from a mile to a mile and a half long.

I will endeavour to describe one of the many boat-races I have witnessed, as it will serve to give a fair idea of all similar festivals in this country. The river bank and long wooden wharf, on the

occasion to which I allude, were densely crowded with a gay throng of both sexes, old and young. The wharf, or jetty, as it may more appropriately be termed, was roofed through its entire length, and the extremity of it set apart for the umpires, among whom we sat; white fresh mats being provided for our accommodation, while gay curtains and flags yielded an agreeable shade, and heightened the general effect. On a table laden with fruit, such as only the climate here could produce, were placed massive silver cups, quaintly carved with the signs of the zodiac, and with other ideal figures; some of them also being inlaid with gold. These rich vases, together with the immense number of golden ornaments ingeniously, nay, beautifully worked, worn by all the young and middle-aged women, the holiday attire of silk, which very few are without, and, above all, the cheerful faces and merry laughter of the company, pleasingly prove how well off, how free they are from privation and the necessity of painful toil.

Among this happy race there is no such unjust privilege of sex as there is amongst the Mahomedans and Hindoos. Men and women have equal rights; a Burmese wife is of the highest importance in the house; she keeps the purse, and oversees all the

buying and selling, from the more important transactions connected with the shipment of rice to other ports, to the daily marketing in the bazaar. Instead of pining under lock and key in a Zenanah, she is free to go and come as she pleases, and behaves all the better, and is all the more trustworthy for the liberty she enjoys. She wears no boorkha or Mahomedan veil, for she has no cause to hide her face; her legal and social rights are admitted; as maid, wife, or widow, her sole right in and power over property is acknowledged, and only under rare and peculiar circumstances can property left her by her parents or ancestors become her husband's; she can hold real property in her own right, and even obtain legal possession of her husband's if he forsake her. But, on the other hand, the matrimonial tie is easily severed. Marriage is simply a civil contract, though infinitely better than the relation between man and wife among the Mahomedans and Hindoos. In a word, the custom and law of marriage among this people appears well adapted to their condition and state of civilization; serious quarrels between a couple are more rare than in most communities, for they being generally on an equality as to property are equally an assistance and help to one another; and as either can demand a divorce

for ill-treatment, on payment of a certain penalty in goods, it has a natural tendency to render them mutually forbearing.

Opposite the wharf, nearly in mid-channel, a canoe is anchored; which shows a large red flag, to mark the winning-post. Across this vessel is laid a hollow bamboo, extending a few feet on either side, through which a line is passed, fastened to small bunches of palm leaves that protrude at each end of the bamboo, and are technically called "flowers." Only two boats race together; and as one comes up on each side of the anchored boat, the winner seizes the flower on his side, and the other being attached to it is instantly drawn through the hollow of the bamboo. This neat little device prevents many a dispute, as there can be no question that he reaches the winning-post first who gets the palms. The boats are often so well matched, that it would be impossible otherwise to tell which won the race, and even with the plan described, it is sometimes a drawn game; namely, when the palms on both sides are seized at the same instant of time. This manner of coming up on either side of the anchored boat also prevents the racers running foul of one another, and to catch the flower requires correct steering and a smart bow-man. Perhaps

some such plan might be adopted with advantage at our pulling races in England.

All the racing boats with their crews come up to the wharf, and dash about here and there, chanting loud choruses, in praise of their boat, their district, or their own prowess, now dashing off with a spurt, tossing high in mid-air the water that flashes in the rays of the noonday sun, and again gliding softly up with scarce a paddle dipped in the smooth stream. Some matches that take place are settled many days previously. The purse for the race between two boats is sometimes as much as a thousand rupees, and very often it is five hundred, the sum being raised in each district by subscription, in which both men and women, and even children, take a share. There are, besides, the outside bets, which often amount to three times the purse run for, and deposited in the umpire's hands.

It must be admitted that the Burmese are great gamblers, and at this season of the year it is permitted by all. A father does not attempt to keep his son from gambling once a year at the races, but it is necessary to pay the stake down on the spot, usually in cash, and this wise arrangement has the effect at least of preventing gambling debts. Nevertheless, here, as in every other society where gambling is prac-

tised, it is the prolific cause of immorality and crime.

One peculiar case was once brought before me judicially. As intimated above, both sexes are accustomed to gamble, and many stake their bets as the boats come up to the wharf, to show themselves off before going to the starting post. In this way a pretty girl of eighteen or so, of very respectable family, bet five rupees on the first race with a young man, a neighbour, who met and joined her party at the strand. Losing this bet, and having no more money with her she backed her gold ring against the five rupees doubled, on the second race; and this she also lost. On the third race she bet her gold necklace against her former losses, and as fortune still crossed her, she next offered to lay her bracelets against the ring and necklace, which was accepted. Strange to say, the bracelets were also lost, and all her ornaments as well as her money, were at once handed over to the winner.

The girl was now driven to despair, for the jewelry belonged to her mother, who, when provoked, was wont to punish her severely. The young man seeing his advantage, and having been for some time a silent suitor for her hand, offered to lay the whole of his winnings against her promise that in the event of

her losing she would become his wife. For a moment, she started with anger at the whispered proposal. But then those beautiful bracelets—that necklace that her young friends all so envied—her mother's rage when she returned home! Surely, she could not lose a fifth time. "Quick," said the tempter, "the boats for the next race are passing down to the starting post. Which will you choose?" With bursting heart she said,—

"I'll back the 'Shoay Pulah' (golden cup)."

"Done," said he: "I take the 'Dzeen Beeloo' (green demon)."

In another moment these boats are at the starting post!

"They're off!—no, no, it's a false start—that's a trick of the 'Green Demons,'" said one: "they wish to tire the young men of the 'Golden Cup' before they're off," said another.

"Oh! how cruel of them," said the girl, in a voice that betrayed her emotion, so as to cause the by-standers to turn round.

"Is your brother in the 'Shoay Pulah?'" asked an acquaintance.

"Oh, no! I don't know."

"You are not betting, are you, Ma Phew?" said an elderly woman.

"I! how could you ask that, aunt?"*

But now the boats are off in reality; how hushed that gay crowd is—they approach the winning post! —well done "Shoay Pulah!" they will have it—no, the old hands creep ahead! young blood for ever!—one more such dash—close thing—excellent race—loud roars the crowd;—one section, "Shoay Pulah, he-he-e!"—the other, "Dzeen Beeloo-oo-oo!"—bang! —loud over all, goes the gun that announces the race is won; some shout, some sing, many dance like demons.

"Oh, aunt! tell me who has won," twice repeats an earnest, quivering voice.

"The 'Green Demons,' my dear; don't you know they are the best boatmen on the river, and the most knowing?"

The exclamation, "A-may!" (mother) was the only answer.

"Phaya! Phaya! (God! God!) you are ill. This heat and crowd has been too much for you. Come, I will take you home to your mother," said the dame.

The following day, Ma Phèw, her mother with her, and an elder sister, came up to my house in the greatest grief, exclaiming—"Oh, save! save! save

* Aunt is a respectful mode of address by a young to an elderly female.

us from this disgrace." Then the above account was given me in tears and sorrow, and the girl added: "He now demands the fulfilment of the promise,—oh, save me! save me!" I sent for the young man; of course held the promise null and void, and earnestly lectured them on the folly of gambling, and the misery it usually produces.

It is seldom, however, that these annual races produce so dark a picture; generally no one bets more than he can afford to lose, and the money is paid down on the spot with good will, and soon forgotten; they all go to their homes merry and happy; and those that have lost, hope for better luck next year; the excitement and gambling, except among a few bad characters, is not kept up, nor does it occur on any other occasion, excepting at Tavoy, where they have annual buffalo fights, either in lieu of the boat-races, or immediately following them. I shall endeavour to give my readers an idea of these spectacles, but a scene of much interest remains to be sketched in connection with the present subject; namely, the day after the boat-racing is all over at Tavoy, when the race-boats take large rafts in tow, and go to picnic and worship at "Shen Motee," or "Shen Daway," two antique Budhist shrines.

These rafts are constructed by fastening two or

more canoes together, and laying a bamboo flooring over them. They are roofed with bamboos, fastened with cane, and covered with nipa palm-leaves, and the whole is gaily decorated with flags and flowers. Each raft has its attendant racing boats, by which it is towed in turn.

The rafts are crowded with women and children, in their gayest attire. Each is provided with a band of Burmese music, and carries five or six of the best-looking maidens of its own district, who take it by turns to dance and sing, while the other women, and even the children, beat time with their hands. At frequent intervals bursts forth a chorus of loud approval, which is taken up by the men in the racing-boats, and again by the hundreds of boats following in the distance and scattered all over the river, till the wild song is re-echoed back from the forest-clad hills that rise on either bank.

One raft is ornamented with a head and tail resembling a peacock; another exhibits a Hentha, or Brahmanee goose; while a third daring innovator upon ancient customs plumes himself on achieving for his craft some faint resemblance to a steam-vessel.

Away down the stream floats the gay procession, and they who please may accompany it in a fast canoe, gliding along from one raft to another; chat-

ting with the elders of one division, and admiring the slow, graceful measure of the dancers of another, in their gay new dresses, loaded with minutely-worked chains of the purest gold.

On arriving at Shen Mootee, all disembark; some form themselves into groups under wide-spreading trees; others take possession of "zéats," or open sheds, made for resting-places, constructed of long wooden posts of great circumference, neatly rounded and varnished, with a plank-flooring raised several feet off the ground. These erections are covered with several roofs, one over another, thatched with nipa leaves, the eaves of each roof being ornamented with wood, boldly carved in the most fantastic style: this ornamentation is so thoroughly cut in, that in many places it pierces through the plank, which is two or three inches thick, giving a fine effect to the foliage and figures represented.

Here all commence eating and drinking, with as much zest and determination as a party of Anglo-Saxons; and would you join them, reader, you will be made most welcome, and to no despicable meal either. The substantials consist of, in the first place, rice, which here, as in all southern Asia, takes the position of the "staff of life;" it is accompanied by at least twelve dishes of different preparations of

fish, fowl, venison, pork, shell-fish, and vegetables, which are eaten with it. Besides this solid fare, the repast comprises a salad of sliced cucumber and oysters, and several chutneys, among which look for the Burmese favourite "ngapee," a somewhat potent preparation of dried shrimps and fish fry, pounded with chillies, garlic, and such condiments; and if Chinamen form part of the company, which is almost always the case, you may be treated to the edible swallow's-nest soup, a very strong "stock" indeed, which closely resembles isinglass.

These nests, I may here remark, are built by the sea-swallows (*hirundo esculenta*), that inhabit several of the rocky islands on the Tavoy coast; and the right to collect their nests is rented to Chinamen for 400*l.* per annum! The nest is built exactly in the form of a house swallow's nest, but, instead of being of mud, it is of a clear, semi-transparent substance, strongly resembling isinglass. The nests are gathered three times a year, and are of three qualities; the first is gathered before the bird has completed its work; and when these are removed, the swallow builds again, but an inferior nest, as feathers and particles of moss or grass are used to make up for the want of gluten; the third quality are those gathered after incubation.

The course we have described is followed by a dessert of fruit, both fresh and preserved, among which are the delicious and deservedly-famed mangosteen, and the doorian, a most peculiar fruit, that has not yet, I believe, found its way to Britain. It is so rich and highly-flavoured that it resembles marrow rather than fruit, and is subject, when ripe, to speedy decomposition, when its odour becomes most disagreeable: a circumstance which has made it detested by almost all who have not been enabled, by the locality in which they reside, to eat the fruit fresh from the tree. Every one who has had this advantage, on the other hand, declares it to be, beyond question, the finest fruit in the world; and, though few eat it the first season of their residence in the country, they afterwards become so fond of it that they never tire of its flavour—never grow weary of speaking in its praise. So diverse is the opinion regarding this fruit, that the subject cannot be mentioned in European society without occasioning a most amusing, and even acrimonious argument. Some ladies, who consider the doorian excessively palatable, will not admit the fact in public; and I have heard, as a fact, that a gentleman received his dismissal from his *fiancée* for having admitted his liking for this forbidden fruit. The Burmese and

Chinese think it the finest nourishment in the world.

An amusing dispute was once brought under my cognizance, and submitted to me for settlement. The owner of a doorian garden was engaged to be married to a Tavoy girl. In his garden he had one very favourite tree; to use his own expression, the smell of it "was as the breath of fairies."

Early one morning, he found his beloved plucking and eating the fruit off it.

He warned her, saying, "You may eat the fruit of all the other trees without question, but not of this one, during my absence."

A second morning he again found her on the same spot. He upbraided her.

She urged, in excuse, that she could not rest all night, thinking of the fruit, but promised not to dream that way again.

Several days passed, and the young lady was not seen near the garden, but still her lover missed the fruit. He was sore perplexed, and, rising before dawn, on one occasion, proceeded to his garden, and there, under the precious tree, was his betrothed, still devouring his doorians. Abuse, recrimination, and all the adjuncts of a lover's quarrel, followed by a final rupture of the engagement, was the consequence of

the girl's excessive partiality for this extraordinary fruit.

After the repast I have described, the company proceed with offerings of lighted wax tapers, flowers, and small coloured paper flags, to worship at the Budhist shrine. This spot, Shen Daway, like many others in Burmah, is esteemed holy, by reason of Godama, the last Boodh, having visited it; on which occasion he left, as a relic, one of his teeth. In other holy places, the evidences of his sojourn are equally trivial, some having nothing to show but his foot-print on the rock.

Among the buildings erected at Shen Daway is a "Dzaidee Phaya," or pagoda, tapering symmetrically to a point, and surmounted by a "tee," or parasol made of metal, which, with the upper portion of the pagoda, is covered with pure gold.* There is also a "woot" or "thien"—a shed of wood beautifully carved, in which is placed a gilded figure of Godama, who is always represented sitting on a pedestal with crossed legs, the left hand on the lap, as if prepared to hold an offering, the other hand on the knee. The expression attempted by the carver is always sublime

* There is upwards of 10,000*l.* worth of gold on the large pagoda at Rangoon.

abstraction; and I may here remark, that we never meet with any repulsive or abhorrent deities, as among the Hindoos. This is the only image that the Burmese worship; and the same attitude is observed in Ceylon and Siam. The Cingalese, however, worship Hindoo images likewise. A third building, placed, as customary in nearly all similar places, at some little distance from the others, is the "khyoung," or monastery, where the priests have their residence. For their use, the laity bring presents of food, fruit, and clothing. The colour of their clothing is always yellow, as in all Budhist countries.

The Burmese are careful to select the most conspicuous and beautiful spots on which to erect the "Phaya;" always on a rising ground, finely wooded, and commanding a view. They certainly, as a people, show good taste in all their works and doings.

After an exhortation from one of the priests, to which at intervals the people chant a response, curiously resembling the form of the Roman Church, the company return homewards by their boats and rafts, dancing, and laughing, and singing as they go.

CHAPTER V.

BUFFALO-FIGHTING AND WRESTLING.

The Arena and the Company—Local interest in the Buffaloes—Betting—Preparing for the Fight—Humane Arrangements—Ceremony in the Arena—Dancing and Singing—Riding the Buffaloes—The Combat—The Defeat—Fatal Occurrence—Showing the White Feather—Boxing and Wrestling—Professors of the "Noble Art of Self-defence"—Mode of conducting the Matches—Accompaniment of Music—Mode of Decision by Umpires—Duty of the Seconds—The Attitude of Defence—Wrestling to the sound of Music—Rewards given to the Combatants—Their admirable good Humour.

In the preceding chapter, I have briefly alluded to the buffalo-fights, which take place about the same time as the annual boat-races in October, and are sometimes substituted for them. They are not nearly so cruel as similar spectacles in Spain, though the excitement among the spectators is quite as great, and the scene not less remarkable for gaiety. Here, too, the shouts in praise of the winning buffalo are everywhere as vehement as the "Tauro!" "Tauro!" at a Spanish bull-fight.

In an open plain outside of the town, a scaffolding is erected, in the form of a circle of about two hundred

feet in diameter. The flooring is raised about twelve feet from the ground, so as to provide two stories, divided into numerous boxes, which are gaily decorated with "curtains" and "purdahs," according to the taste of the owner. The scaffolding is formed of light wood and bamboo work, and roofed with leaves. Two openings in the circle are left facing each other, through which the rival buffaloes are introduced into the arena.

This sport is the most popular in Tavoy, and not only the whole town, but the entire population of the district, congregate to witness it. The women in their gayest silks, and wearing the whole of their jewellery, as usual, fill the upper tier of boxes, and take no minor part in the proceedings. The town is deserted, and the streets are as lonely as those of Pompeii.

The clannish feeling that we remarked in the boat-races is evident also in this popular amusement. Each buffalo belongs to a separate division of the town or country, and has its distinctive name and badge. The people of one district back their buffalo for several hundred tickals of silver against that of another, and the bet is divided among a great number of subscribers, some having ten rupees in the venture, some five, others one or two, but all taking

the deepest interest in the result of the fight. The honour of their buffalo seems to be identical with their own.

The owners of a fighting buffalo keep him in a stable apart from all others. For many days before the fights come off, they will not allow a soul out of their own district even to see it, for fear of tricks being played; indeed, a successful buffalo will be thus carefully kept and fed for years. Though a powerful and ferocious-looking animal, with enormous horns, greatly differing in size and appearance from the Indian buffalo—still he is usually wonderfully docile and quiet with those he is accustomed to. He is apt, though, to charge a European, from not being accustomed to his dress, and serious accidents do now and then occur.

The matches between the different buffaloes are usually made several days before the grand fight comes off; some, however, are made on the spot. Each buffalo has two attendants; one leads it, and the other rides it. They are never attacked or goaded on to the fight, the natural pugnacity of the animal being considered sufficient for the day's amusement, which prevents the scene being so cruel as in other countries.

The buffaloes are led in, one at each opening of

the arena, usually decorated with garlands of flowers. Besides the two personal attendants of each animal, about twenty of the young men of the district hold a long scarf, forming a circle round him, which prevents him at first seeing his opponent. In this manner, and attended with music, they walk him once round the arena, singing and dancing as they go. This ceremony over, the two buffaloes are brought together, facing each other in the centre; the riders mount on their bare backs, with only a small band round the animal's middle to hold on by; the dancers simultaneously let go the scarfs, running right and left out of the arena, and the two buffaloes suddenly stand face to face, while a hush steals over the spectators, who wait the result still as death. For a few seconds the eyes of the noble animals flash bright with gathering anger—one paws the ground, the other tosses his long unwieldy horns in the air, and gives a short sharp bellow; then, with a quick step that breaks into a gallop, the beasts madly rush at each other. Bowing their heads to the ground, their broad-tufted foreheads meet with a crash, and the next moment, with a sweep from side to side, their horns clash loudly together, and the points being turned well forward, pierce the shoulder of each opposing animal. For a moment only they

draw back a pace or two, and then, with a loud shout from the audience, crash together again. Brave and strong must be the riders that are able to keep their seat through the first onset. Often they are thrown sprawling on the turf, but, strong and active, are up again in a moment, and with voice and action encourage their buffaloes to maintain the fight.

Shortly, perhaps, one of the buffaloes is hurt, or feels himself over-matched, and turns; then the other rushes after him and gores him behind, upon which he wheels round against his opponent, and again their heads crash together: one with his long horns trips the other up, and the monster comes to the ground with a noise like distant thunder. Although the defeated animal is allowed to get up again, in all probability he refuses to stand his ground, and finally rushes from the arena, followed by the shouts and jeers of the winners.

Six or eight of such fights will come off in one day, and the season lasts two, or sometimes three days. The buffaloes are seldom much injured; and if they have made a good fight, they are taken the greatest care of, nursed, and fed up for the next year.

The riders of the buffaloes are usually the strongest and most active young men of their dis-

trict, and are always looked up to and treated with consideration. The result of the fight is considered in a great measure to depend upon them, and their bravery and address render them general favourites among the women. On the other hand, a broken rib or limb is not an unusual occurrence, and within my own knowledge one man was killed; when the buffaloes met, he was thrown into the air, and falling on the horns of the other beast was instantly transfixed. Such an accident, however, is of rare occurrence.

It will sometimes happen when the buffaloes are brought together, and the scarfs are removed, at the instant when every breath is drawn, and expectation is at the highest pitch, that one of the animals will make a low, calfish cry, and then they walk up and sniff one another in the most peaceful and amicable manner, amid jeers and shouts of laughter from the audience. The riders then dismount, stand on their heads, go through some absurd antics, and ride their buffaloes out with their faces to the tails, greatly to the merriment of the young people, who scramble round the umpire to have their deposited bets returned.

Except our own island, this is perhaps the only corner of the world where a lad is taught self-defence with his fists; and, as with us, it appears to

have the much-to-be-desired effect of checking the use of the knife in sudden quarrels and other disturbances. The Tavoyers are especially fond of boxing matches; most of the young men learn to box, and a proficient in the art is always held in high esteem and repute. On holidays or festivals their most common "poé," or entertainment, is a boxing match. Hundreds of persons meet at a large zéat or shed, often at a monastery, and make up the matches on the ground. Eight or ten often take place at one meeting; the passage of arms consists of wrestling or tripping up as well as boxing, and is conducted as follows:—

A ring is formed, and kept clear by three or four elders or leading men, bearing long slender canes; a place is also set apart for those who feel inclined to have a round, and the audience sit or stand in a dense mass on the outside of the ring, a scaffolding being erected on one side for the umpire and heads of divisions. As in every other "poé," a national band is in attendance, which plays during the combat. There is no severe or cruel punishing, the first drop of "claret" from the nose, a cut lip, or two fair falls, finishes the match. More than three rounds are never allowed, and the umpires settle, without reference to the combatants themselves, which of the

two is the winner, or declare the joust to be drawn; after which the boxers retire with the greatest good humour.

When the umpires have made a match between two fellows, each as sturdy and strong-limbed as any ancient gladiator, they strip to the tightly tucked-up "putso," fasten up their long raven locks with a silken handkerchief, and tie another round the waist. Then, after exchanging an amicable word or two, they take up a position in the centre of the ring; each being accompanied by a second, whose duty it is to stand by and instantly separate the combatants on the appearance of the first drop of blood, or, if it should be a wrestling-match, on their locking together. The seconds are generally old professors and teachers of the art.

The attitude of defence differs much from the Anglo-Saxon, and is not so good; indeed, the object seems to be to plant the first good blow, and leave the rest to chance; but the agility and rapidity with which they dodge a blow, and put in one too, would be considered admirable anywhere. As the combatants advance, each carefully watches his opponent's eye, with one arm in reserve, and the other nervously put out and withdrawn, as if feeling the distance, the music playing as they draw

near each other; gradually the measure quickens, the muscular motion of the combatants seems to keep time to it—a feint, a blow dodged, a right and left home—the music faster and faster—a cross buttock cleverly escaped, and another blow home: the kettle-drums dance madly in the circular frame—the combatants close together—they tug and trip; and as they come to the ground, the seconds rush in and separate them; the music also dies away more exhausted than the wrestlers themselves. Then prizes of gay silk and muslin turbans are distributed to the two gladiators, that given to the winners being a more costly one than the losers.

I cannot conclude this brief description of an exciting national sport, without observing on the admirable good temper of the combatants. I never heard of one being seriously hurt, or a case of bad blood arising from a boxing match. In a word, as remarked more than once in these pages, I believe this people to be the best-tempered and happiest race in the whole world.

CHAPTER VI.

RELIGIOUS FÊTES.

Burning the High Priest—Embalmment of the Body—Lying in State—Curious Emblematic Paintings—Belief in Alchymy—The Funeral Car—Music and Dancing—An Evening Stroll—The Rehearsals—Rival Performances—The Funeral Procession—Feasting and Smoking—Rocket Cars—Firing the Pile—Description of a second Religious Festival called the Matho Thengan—Evening Scene; Weaving the Sacred Cloth—Growing the Cotton—Working and Courting—Attendance at the Spinning Wheels—Dyeing the Cloth—Relays of Workers—Scene in the Morning—The Cloth finished—Custom of the 15th Katsoungmoong—Floating Lights—Water Festival on New Year's Day—Everyone Wet—Water Party at the Author's—Original Meaning of the Observance—Mythological Legend.

THE national pastimes we have described are not very dissimilar from the sports and amusements of other nations; but there are several of a religious character peculiar to the country. In fact, the most national of all the Burmese festivals is one of this distinctive class; I allude to the "Phoongyee Byan," usually termed, in English, "the burning of a High Priest."

My readers will of course understand that the good old man has previously consigned all the cares and

vicissitudes of this life to his successor. The body is embalmed in honey, placed in a gaily-decorated coffin, into the apertures of which is poured melted wax and resin, until every crevice in it is filled. A portion of the "kyoung," or monastery, in which the phoongyees, or priests, live, is then set apart for the body, where it lies in state, on a raised platform, fantastically ornamented with painted spirits, forest nymphs, and strange children of the air. These curious beings are represented with human bodies, and with feet like a bird; wings being omitted, because such appendages are considered unnecessary to enable a fairy to fly, while the claws are required to perch on trees and flowers. Over the platform is a white canopy decorated with tinsel brocade, in appearance like gold and silver; the four corners of which are supported by as many white umbrellas, more than twenty feet in height, enriched in a similar manner, and perhaps with quaintly-cut paper.

Around the walls of the room or hall containing the body are also suspended curtains of white cloth, stretched over wooden frames; and on this drapery are depicted, with gayest colours and minute drawing, though but in Chinese perspective, scenes descriptive of Godama the last Budh's progress on earth. Here we may see portrayed that land of fairy brightness

which only the truly good can hope to enter upon at once; there gloams a monstrous purgatory where demons administer tortures that would instruct even the authors of the Inquisition, or the Bengal mutineers. Among the scenes here depicted, gentle reader, you may at last find the successful alchymist who sits entranced with delight, crucible in hand, in which he has just perfected the "great secret."

No people believe more implicitly in the doctrines of alchymy than the Burmese. The infatuation that the "philosopher's stone" was discovered by their wise forefathers, and being lost, that the mystery may again be found, is partly the faith of all classes, both among the priesthood and laity.

After the body has lain in state the full period, which may be for several months, vast preparations are made for burning it. The funeral pyre, which is erected on a car, is composed of fantastic framework of light bamboo and cane, somewhat after the fashion of a Chinese pagoda, and covered with paper or cloth, on which is painted scenes from Eastern mythology, in brightest colours, the whole decked out with tinsel, and gay streamers surmounting the lofty and tapering pinnacle of the pyre.

For a month previous to the last and great day when the pyre is fired, sixteen or twenty of the most

comely maidens of each division of the town are taught a slow, graceful dance, accompanied by a song. The dancers are arranged in rows of four; each of the parties thus formed dancing separately, and having its own music and song. The best-looking, and the daughters of the best families, are usually chosen for this solemnity, it being considered an honour that cannot well be refused. They are dressed in their gayest silks and richest jewellery, accompanied by the people of their divisions, who clap their hands, keeping time with the music and calm quiet dance, which is performed as much by the hands and arms as the feet; while the peculiar Burmese dress, already described, shows every curve of the figure, which is usually slight, but well moulded. The dress is open down one side, which is not noticed when in repose; but as the dancers gently turn, a neat little foot and ankle, and a well-rounded limb, for an instant glance forth. The jet black hair of these maidens, in the profusion of which they pride themselves, is profusely adorned with fresh flowers, so that the air is filled with their sweets. It is, perhaps, but once in a lifetime that girls so well nurtured have the opportunity of exhibiting their charms in public; and though the downcast eye proves their carefully-preserved modesty, a natural

desire to excel, and a certain pleasure in captivating the earnest gaze of the throng, are very evidently felt.

The young men also form dancing and singing parties, like the girls, in phalanxes of four. In a loud voice, accompanied with violent gestures, they chant of their manly deeds; and a gay scene they form, going through the evolutions of the dance in their bright silk "putsos" and snowy white turbans; some quaintly disguised as demons, others again, as monkeys, or as the great bird that flew away with Sinbad the Sailor. These bands accompany the funeral pyre, and perform in shady spots, while it is being burnt.

However *ennuyé* you may be, reader, with all the gaieties of a season in the metropolis—bored by Lord Pomposo's endless dinners, weary of Lady Suavezza's evenings at home, and worried to death by Madam Serpentiffero's politics and gossip, until you have arrived at the belief that nothing again can amuse you—yet how you would enjoy an evening stroll at Tavoy, visiting the different troops of maidens, who have assembled to rehearse the dance for the approaching "phoongyee byan!" You start with me, let it be supposed, from my own house on Siam hill. You will observe that it is constructed of wood, raised high off the ground on posts, resembling, at first

sight, an overgrown Swiss cottage, consisting chiefly of verandah and open hall, exposed to every breath of wind, but cool, airy, and well suited to the soft climate. Nothing can be greener than the grass here, nothing brighter than the blossom that hangs from the pterocarpus trees that form the little avenue, scenting the breeze that comes to us cool and refreshed after rolling to the beach the billows of the vast ocean. The sun has almost disappeared behind the western hills, and the sweet short note of the bulbul may now and again be heard between intervals of the full melodious song of the ethereal warbler. It were pleasant to linger even here; but let us proceed.

We first enter the "northern village" division of the town. Here, beneath the deep shade and wide-spreading boughs of a few magnificent mango-trees, on the grounds belonging to the Pakoucoo monastery, are arranged the selected damsels; and here, under the boughs of a wild jasmine, we may quietly watch the twinkling feet, and listen to the merry voices of the laughing girls. All in this band of dancers are dressed in black velvet jackets—a colour and material that show off a Burman complexion to advantage. The head is uncovered, which displays to advantage the rich masses of hair, neatly gathered

together at the back of the head, and ornamented with a single rose. The music that accompanies their voices is simple, but sweet: the instruments consisting of a guitar in the shape of a boat or alligator—an instrument similar to our clarionet—a circle of very small kettle-drums of different sizes and tones, played with the fingers by a man who sits in the centre of them, and a pair of silver castanets. The burden of their song is the praises of their district, the manly deeds of the men, the good looks and virtue of the maids.

The performers of the next division appear in white jackets and pink scarfs, with white lilies in their hair; they sing that "opposite their district all the vessels anchor, and in their streets are commerce and wealth." It is by no means the least amusing part of the scene that is formed by the rivalry between the different bands, and the jealousy caused by any show of preference for a particular district.

When all is at last prepared, the lofty decorated pyre, with the coffin inside, is placed on a large car with six or more wheels; long ropes are attached to both the front and back, and it is dragged out to the burning place by the whole town, dressed in holiday attire, accompanied by the dancers; by the

priests, old and young; and by all, in fact, who can by any possibility attend. The open plain being reached, a hundred or two take hold of the ropes in front, and an equal number behind, and with loud shouts pull different ways—men, women, and children, on either side—one towards the kyoung, where the deceased lived, the other towards the burning-place. To the uninitiated this scene is anything but a mournful one. The car, cracking and trembling, moves slowly first to one side, then to the other, and at last, with shouts of delight, the strongest party carry it off, with a run, along the grass; more join the beaten party, the ropes are again caught up, and, after a little coquetting, away goes the car back again.

At last the car is placed in the centre of the plain, and all leave it to refresh themselves in numerous extempore booths, in which vermicelli, soup, cakes, sherbet, and rice cooked in a dozen different ways, are sold. All smoke, even women and children. The ladies usually prefer a cigar made of a very small quantity of tobacco, mixed with fine shavings of the aromatic root of the tobacco plant, rolled in a leaf; sometimes a little sugar is added. It is weak, but palatable.

While all are picnicking it under trees or in zĕats, rockets are placed in position to be fired at the pyre.

These rockets, which are of great size, are made of the stem of a tree, hollowed out and filled with gunpowder and other compound combustibles beaten down with great force. The projectile thus made is firmly fastened to a little car which goes on four wheels, and is gaily decorated, the figure of a man or demon surmounting the rockets in the attitude of riding. All the rocket cars are placed pointing to the pyre, at distances varying from one to two hundred yards, and the object of firing them is to light the funeral pyre. Each district has one or more rockets, and the people take pride in their success in the same spirit of emulation that we have before remarked upon in connection with their other amusements.

A match being applied to a small aperture at the end of the combustible, it emits a shower of sparks, and dense smoke, and burning gradually, propels the car to which it is fastened, with its decorated demon and flags, at considerable speed over the plain, followed by the cheers of the district to which it belongs. The rocket often, however, misses the pyre, and plunges into the forest beyond, then describing a curve, it rushes back through the crowd. Sometimes it explodes midway in its career, and then it is very dangerous. At last one hits the pyre, scattering

around it combustibles which assist the flame to ignite, and, midst shouts of delight and renewed dance and song, the bright flame shoots up, embracing each gay pinnacle and gaudy flag, till the whole comes down with a crash, and is soon reduced to ashes.

I may here describe another interesting festival, and one more likely than any other to please the Englishman, from its active busy show of work, and that work a cotton manufacture. It is not so usual as the foregoing, and I have only witnessed it at Tavoy, where it is termed Matho Thengan. It consists in weaving the sacred yellow cloth for presentation to the priests and offerings at various shrines, from the raw cotton, *in one day*. If the indulgent reader is not tired of these frivolities, he may join company, as on the former occasion, in the character of an eye-witness.

It was about eight o'clock, one bright moonlight evening, that we walked to the garden chosen for the Poé. Some twenty or thirty looms were arranged along the centre walk, decorated as usual with flowers; they were set up all ready to receive the warp, and the shuttles lay ready for the woof. All the bushes and shrubs, whether orange, citron, or rose, looked as white in the moonlight as if it had just been snowing heavily—rather an unusual

phenomenon in a tropical garden, which explained itself on examination, as we found that they were covered with raw cotton, sprinkled all over the branches, thorns, and leaves.

In one corner were two or three dozen spinning-wheels, in another large iron pans with yellow dye, while a considerable space was occupied with lighted stalls, in which tea, soup, cheroots, vermicelli, and all manner of preparations of rice and flour were prepared for sale, or for giving away *pro bono publico*. The Burmese are as fond of tea as the Chinese; they not only drink it, but, like the old English dame, when she first received a pound of tea from her sailor son, they eat the leaves buttered and pickled. But we had scarcely time to make the recorded observations, when the fun commenced fast and furious. The garden was filled with Tavoyers, principally young men and women, who had commenced gathering the cotton in baskets, and a little courting we could see was going on behind several bushes, while the mammas sat in a long row at some little distance, picking the seeds from the cotton, which was brought to them in basketfuls by the girls.

And now a young man, sewn up in a tiger skin, who had lain hid in a thicket, suddenly sprung out

with a well-feigned roar among a bevy of girls, who shrieked in earnest, and ran in every direction, as if they were really frightened, and not simply startled. Some were caught in their lovers' arms, while others had only brothers to guard them. The young men brought out clubs and dahs (large knives), and one of the most timid maids ran to me with a mock petition to expel the tiger, that had retired to the shade of the bushes. All collected in a circle, as some of the men went gallantly in with clubs, when out again sprung the tiger from the opposite side. Another scream and a rush, and scarfs and silks strewed the grass; the old women came clattering down, punched the now surrounded tiger, and pulled him out of his skin, which was soon torn to pieces by the damsels, who had recovered their presence of mind, and thus showed their little spite.

Then the cotton picking went on again, and soon half a hundred spinning-wheels were burring away, two, sometimes three women to a single wheel, so that when one was tired, she gave place to another; with the speed thus obtained, soon the thread began to find its way to the dyers, who were now hard at work; and entertainments of supper, cigars, and tea, with merry peals of laughter, passed away the time till it was long past midnight. The moon was on

the wane; many had gone home, and others had arrived, and still the wheels burred and the dyers' fires burnt brightly as we wended our way home.

The following morning we returned to see how the cloth was getting on, and there was the warp of bright yellow thread stretched on many looms; busy fingers were engaged winding the woof on the shuttles, and on some looms already surrounded by maids, who relieved one another every five minutes, the shuttle was flying backwards and forwards at a pace that soon turned out long narrow pieces of cloth, that were stitched and folded up all ready to be carried off to the various shrines and monasteries; and before evening the whole work was completed.

A pretty and very ancient custom, annually observed by the Burmese, probably borrowed from India, where it is also practised, is that of floating fire-boats and rafts down the particular river or stream upon which the town is built; every town, it may be observed, being built on the banks of a stream. This custom is observed at night on the 15th of the moon Katsoungmoong, corresponding with our month of November. Crowds come down to the river bank, principally women, every one of whom carries a fairy bark, constructed of the stem of the plantain tree, and slips of bamboo and cane, with

one or more lights in it. These little vessels they launch off in the still night, and as they slowly float away towards the sea, the current forms the long brilliant line into fantastic shapes and figures, which are watched by many a deeply fringed dark eye, as they fade away in the far distance. I have sat in my light canoe and watched the slight, lightly clad figures come down one after another to the bank, and with the tide just rippling over their naked feet, gently push adrift on the water the lighted toy, and wondered what was passing in the little mind that seemed so absorbed in the fate of the twinkling flame. If the maiden be asked, her reply will amount to no more than this—that 'tis an old custom—an offering to the river spirit, and a token of good luck if the light burns long.

The last I propose to describe, and perhaps the most remarkable spectacle in Burmah, is the water festival, at the Burmese New Year, reminding one of the showers of "confetti" and the "mazzi di fiori" that salute the revellers during the Carnival at Rome; only here, instead of sweetmeats and nosegays, water is thrown, sometimes indeed scented, or having flowers in it. On this occasion, the fronts of the houses are decorated with green leaves; all hands, but particularly the young men and women, form

little bands: armed with jars of clear water and silver cups, they send a shower at all passers, and go from house to house, and duck every one they meet. Companies that meet have a downright fight till they are thoroughly drenched with water, but the weather being warm on New Year's day, it is not felt as an inconvenience. Some will go home and dress again, but the moment the smoothly-ironed white jacket is seen, some sly puss runs up behind and throws a jug of water over it. No one by right escapes; it is considered very sulky of anyone to object to this little ritual; and bad luck is sure to ensue to those who are not wet through at least once during the day.

They come trooping up to my house, a merry party from each division, having their jars filled, many of them with water scented with different flowers. Preparations have been made on a large scale for their reception. They commence at first timidly sprinkling the water, but soon they become more and more daring; and the water is dashed backwards and forwards with a vigour one would scarcely expect from arms so slight, while bursts of merry laughter follow on each well-directed shot. A quaint wild sight it is to see a bevy of maids rushing wildly about with their long wet hair streaming down their backs, and the light dress

drenched, and clinging to each curve of the figure, loudly shouting "Ma-tso-boo!—ma-tso-boo!" (Not wet!—not wet!), much in the same spirit that an Italian girl calls "Sénza moccoletti! sénza moccoletti!" after having just dashed the lighted taper out of an unwary hand on the last night of the carnival.

The original idea, and a good one, I think, of this festival at the commencement of the new year, is that of washing out the sins of the past, and any little ill feeling that may have grown up during the year that has just faded away. There is also a mythological tale of its typifying the washing of a king's head that the seven fairies who watch over time hold in their laps, and which is passed from the hands of one to another as the old year goes out and the new comes in; but even this is the same idea of washing away an old sore, and taking away burdens.

It is suprising how much time and money are expended in all these ceremonies and national amusements; but the people, as regards civilization, are yet in their childhood. They have scarcely a care, destitution is unknown, and two days' labour suffices for three days' bread. Would to God that the poor of Great Britain had their comfort and lightness of heart!

CHAPTER VII.

A RUN AFTER DACOITS.

Dacoity—A good Freebooting Country—The White Karens—Mistake of the Government—Rebellion of 1856—Success of Men-Loung—Appointment of the Author—Volunteers—Place of Rendezvous—The wooded Banks of the Salween—Source of the River—Native Villages—Muster of Forces—Elephants—Commissariat Arrangements—The March—The Zimmay Chiefs—Canoes and Rafts—Shooting the Rapids—The Dacoits in Province Amherst—Pursuit and Encampment—Surprised by the Enemy—Tracking the Salween—Rout of the Camp—Summary Trial and Execution—The Villagers pacified—Arrival of the Siamese Chiefs—Patrol appointed—Difficulties of the Navigation—The Chiefs' Stronghold—Purchase of Slaves—Desolated Country—Dacoits surprised—Red Karens—Destroyed Villages—Disappointment of an Ambuscade—Capture and release of Prisoners—"Done" by the Dacoits—Lawless State of the Country—Straying from Camp—Storming the Enemy in Position—Defeat of the Dacoits, and Rescue of Prisoners—Appeal to the Karennee Clans—Cruelty of the Marauders—Clearing the Country—Evasion of Men-Loung—Fruitless Pursuit—Return Home.

The Burmese, under their native government, were notorious dacoits; their wars were a series of dacoities on a large scale. Dacoit, though a Hindostanee word, is, I believe, generally well understood as being used for all armed bands of marauders—rob-

bers who plunder by force, and hold in contempt the robber who steals by cunning.

No country offers greater facilities to these free-booters than Burmah. The sparseness of the population, and the excessively difficult nature of the country, render their capture almost impossible; while the number of timber and other traders who wander far inland, visiting the independent tribes in the north, with hard cash, as well as merchandise, for the purchase of teak timber and other produce, renders dacoity a lucrative employment.

Cattle-lifting is still of common occurrence on the northern borders of even our old provinces; but in the lately acquired province of Martaban, up to the end of the year 1857, violent and open dacoity was frequent, but more particularly in the north-eastern part of that province, termed, from the name of the stream flowing through it, the Yoongzalen Division,—a very mountainous and inaccessible tract,—with most lovely valleys, watered by clear mountain streams. Many of these vales are well cultivated, and the soil is rich and productive. The mountains rise to 5,000, or perhaps 6,000 feet in height, and are, for the most part, covered with dense forests of enormous growth; their summits being clothed with fir-trees of two distinct species,

viz., the red and white pine, so called from the colour of the timber. These forests have never been worked, though the timber is magnificent, and much of it grows close to mountain streams leading into the broad river Salween, so that there is ample water-carriage to bring it to a market at the town of Moulmein. So long, however, as teak timber is abundant, it is not probable that the pine forests will be touched.

Such are the mountains and valleys inhabited by a tribe called by their neighbours the White Karens, a very fair, well-made, fine-looking race, who were always able to hold their own against the Burmese conquerors of the country, though they paid from time to time some small tribute in forest produce. This people, and the wild Karen tribes and mountaineers in general living beyond them, have looked upon our rule with much dislike, partly from the great mistake made by the Government in placing Burmese officials over them, and also from a general distaste for every kind of restraint, and for what we esteem good order.

Previous to the year 1856, they were divided into separate clans, and, accordingly, were not very powerful; but at that time the standard of rebellion was set up by one who styled himself "Men-Loung,"

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Anglice, King in Embryo, and soon numbered several hundred followers. All the robbers and freebooters for 100 miles round, of every tribe and race, flocked to him, and acknowledging his authority, conferred upon him the magnificent title of Lord of the Four Continents. The Karen villagers at first really believed that this adventurer had been sent with supernatural powers to rule over them, and to become a great king, and with this conviction adopted his cause; while those who refused to join him were plundered of all their property, their villages burnt, and themselves sold into captivity to the Siamese.

Two strong parties of troops, consisting of Europeans and Native Irregulars, were detached after the rebel chief; but one party fell into an ambuscade in one of the numerous mountain passes, and suffered considerable loss, and, owing to the great natural difficulties of the country, both were obliged to return without effecting anything of consequence. On the return of the troops to cantonments, during the rains, the dacoits plundered and burnt many more villages, and carried off hundreds of men, women, and children captive. Besides this, some forty or more native timber-merchants were cut up and plundered at different times and places, which greatly checked and injured the Moulmein timber trade. The dacoits,

emboldened by their success, built stockades and standing camps at different places on the banks of the rivers, and near the principal forest routes, and actually held possession for a time of the Yoongzalen Division up to the western bank of the Salween river.

In the end of 1857, I was appointed a Commissioner in the Yoongzalen Division under Act XVI. of 1857, termed the Mutiny Act; and on the 4th of January, 1858, I left Moulmein in command of an expedition in boats up the river Salween, having for its object the suppression of open and violent dacoity on the banks of that river. My instructions were also to co-operate with Major Berdmore, commanding another party from Shoay Gyeen, for the destruction or capture of the numerous armed bodies of men in the Yoongzalen district, who were banded together under several chiefs, and had adopted the appellation of "Men-Loung's People." The arrest of the impostor "Men-Loung" himself, was, of course, ordered, if he could be found; for I ought to remark that he had by this time given up commanding in person. He was supposed to be living as an ascetic, and working on the superstition of his followers, but his place of retreat was kept a profound secret.

The force that accompanied me consisted principally of volunteers from the province under my charge, who were willing to serve without pay, on condition of arms and food being furnished them. Our rendezvous was the village of Yenbine, in Province Amherst, about seventy miles up the river Salween, where I and some of my party arrived in boats on the 8th of January, having pulled up against the clear strong current for three days, through some very remarkable scenery. The banks are beautifully wooded, with high hills at intervals overhanging the broad stream; at other places, in the midst of rich alluvial plains, perpendicular rocks of pure limestone rise in isolated masses several hundred feet in height, and sometimes, though only a few feet in breadth, run east and west for miles, as is usual with calcareous limestone cliffs. These rocks are perforated with magnificent and lofty caves, where massive stalagmites rise in rich ornamental pillars, and from the vaulted roof hang glitteringly white and polished stalactites in all their pristine beauty.

It is known that this river Salween flows all the way from China, though no European traveller has yet reached its source. During the height of the monsoon, it is by no means uncommon for it to bring

down on its broad bosom unmistakeable relics of that strange people; sometimes pieces of Chinese coffins, and painted boards with their quaint hieroglyphics, proving that the river is undermining some grave-yard in the celestial empire.

We passed several large villages, among others Twikhla, in the near neighbourhood of which the now far-famed and most beautiful known tree, the "Amherstia Nobilis," was first met with. At Yen-bine, our appointed rendezvous, I mustered my forces, consisting of a non-commissioned officer and five artillerymen, Europeans, with two small brass howitzers, which we carried on the march, swung on either side of an elephant, 125 river police and irregulars, and 320 volunteers, making a muster roll of 450 men; all of whom I armed with muskets, and placed under the command of their several "Myo Thorgyees," or heads of districts; they principally consisted of Burmese and Karens, but nearly every Asiatic race was represented.

Our ammunition and provisions were carried by forty-three elephants; no other means of transport over the mountain passes being available. The principal difficulty that I knew we should have to contend with, was to provide commissariat in the almost unknown and pathless forests to be

traversed; for, after leaving Province Amherst, I dared not count on finding even rice and salt, and I had therefore to take with me from Moulmein a considerable supply of rice, salt, and salt fish, which were the least bulky and least expensive provisions procurable.

Thus provided, on the 11th of January, we started from Yenbine village, and in two long marches through a forest, without a single human habitation, we reached the bank of the Thoungyeen river, at the Ghat, or crossing, into the Siamese territory; and here met, by appointment, messengers from the chiefs of Zimmay, a large district tributary to Siam. The Karen Tsokays, or heads of villages, from the Siamese bank, also flocked in with little offerings of rice and fruit, and expressed their joy at meeting us, and their earnest hope that we would drive away the dacoits that were constantly burning and plundering their villages, and carrying off men, women, and children captive. I arranged with the messengers to meet their chiefs at "Dak-won-tsiek," on the river Salween, about thirty-five or forty miles above its junction with the Thoungyeen River. At this Ghat on the Thoungyeen, I had sent on a party, some days before starting on the expedition, to prepare canoes and rafts, in which to proceed down

the river Thoungyeen to the point of confluence, a distance of about fifty miles; this detour from the Salween River is made necessary by the great Fall between Yenbine and the mouth of the Thoungyeen.

These rivers have never been navigated except by Karens, on light scooped logs of wood; and we here found the stream so rapid and turbulent from the late monsoon, that I willingly agreed to avail myself of the earnest offers of the chiefs' messengers, to send one-half of my force and supplies overland, by a pathway through their territory to Dak-wontsiek, while I myself proceeded down the river with the remainder, in ten small canoes and eight light rafts, constructed of bamboos, in search of a large band of dacoits that were reported to be devastating the country.

We got all the canoes and rafts fitted out and laden on the 13th and 14th, and started early on the morning of the 15th January. Shooting some of the rapids was nervous work for the non-swimmers, but all went well and at a great pace till about 3 P.M., when we met a party of the dacoits on a promontory on the Siamese bank, who had the temerity to dispute our passage. Two boats' crews being landed, however, sufficed to drive them inland with ease, and

we proceeded on our way. While thus occupied, the rafts had been washed on with the current, and, on coming up with them, I found one wrecked, and its crew in the water. The men were landed safely, and the raft recovered with much exertion and delay; but the stores on it were partially lost, and all damaged. It was by this time too late to go on, so I collected as many of the boats and rafts together as possible on a sand-bank, and camped for the night.

At this place we met two Karens, who informed me that a large party of the dacoits had, for the first time, the previous day, crossed into Province Amherst, at the point formed by the junction of the Thoungyeen with the Salween, and were then in the act of carrying off captive the women and children from their village. This made it evident that, had we been only a few days later, much injury would have been done to this province.

At the earliest dawn I detached a party of volunteers to follow up the dacoits, and proceeded myself with two boats down the river to its confluence with the Salween, to cut off their retreat, leaving the remainder of the force to follow quietly. We came up with the dacoits as expected, and, having hunted them over the mountains and through the

dense forest the whole day, obliged them to relinquish their captives and plunder, and drove them back out of Amherst Province into the Yoongzalen District. The same night we encamped on a sand-bank at the junction of the two rivers. Three rafts were reported wrecked, and a considerable portion of the supplies and baggage lost or damaged, including all my private stores.

Early the following morning I despatched a party with the two best boats, to reinforce my rear-guard with the wrecked rafts, and to bring up everything that could be saved. In this they succeeded, and we had the satisfaction of learning that no lives had been lost, and that the missing stores amounted to thirty bags of rice, a couple of boxes of ammunition, and three muskets.

On the same day, the 17th January, about noon, a party of about 150 well-armed dacoits boldly attacked our camp. Having stolen close up behind some rocks, within a distance of fifty yards, their shots perforated our tent, and struck one man before we were aware of their proximity. I had barely time to call out, "Stand to your arms!" and, catching up my rifle, rush to a rock they were fast approaching, which commanded our position. There were a few yards of open sand between the point I had

gained and the rocks held by the dacoits, and this some of them tried to pass with a dash, while others kept up a sharp fire from the cover of the rocks. The effort failed, however; and, as I was soon supported, we held our own till our volunteers, who had never been in action before, recovered from their first panic, and advanced in line. In a few minutes, with the assistance of a howitzer, they drove the dacoits back with loss, and followed them up into the dense forest, when they were recalled to camp.

By the following morning we had refitted our canoes and two rafts, which we constructed by lashing together two canoes for each raft, and covering them with a bamboo flooring. We then, with strong advance, centre, and rear-guard, commenced tracking up the Salween river, towards the enemy's camp, which we learnt was close to us on the Yoongzalen, or British bank, at the mouth of a small tributary stream called the "Mhe-tha-louk." As we made way the enemy commenced a dropping fire on us from the high wooded bank; in answer to which I threw one-half the advance guard into skirmishing order, and detached a small flanking party of Karens, on which the dacoits fell steadily back. As the bank was rocky and difficult, and the boats could

only be pulled along against the current with ropes, at a very slow pace, we accepted the opportunity of proceeding, without pursuing our advantage, and steadily advanced without firing a shot.

At last we came in sight of the dacoits, in a position of some strength, in advance of their camp, which they seemed determined to hold. They had chosen ground on the top of a high ridge of rocks jutting out into the river, round which it was necessary for our boats to pass, if we would proceed further. As I could not hope to carry the position in front without loss of men, I detached a party of Karens to make their way through the forest on the top of the high bank, and take the dacoits in flank and rear, their first discharge to be the signal for the advance guard to rush in. This arrangement failed, however, either from the excessive density of the jungle and difficulty of the ground, or want of sufficient pluck on the part of those detached. I then landed one of the howitzers, and Sergeant Carberry pitched two shells with beautiful precision; and the volunteers instantly advancing at a run, scrambled up the rocks, and the place was carried, contrary to my expectation, without the loss of a man.

We now pushed on towards the camp of the enemy, which was situated on a hill commanding

the river. Our arrangements were soon made. Before arriving at the exact spot, having already left a party to advance at a given signal, we passed all our baggage over to the opposite shore, where we got the howitzers in position at about 300 yards distance, while I myself crossed with three boats' crews above the camp. Thus attacked simultaneously on both flanks and in front, the enemy fired without effect, and took to precipitate flight. Their camp was given up to plunder, and burnt. Our party also followed up the flying dacoits; and some of my volunteers—Nga-pan-dah and his hill men—obliged one body of them to relinquish their elephants, three in number, and all their baggage. In fine, the dacoits lost seven men killed, and a large portion of their arms and ammunition in this encounter.

During the 19th and 20th, we still tracked up the river with much labour and difficulty, owing to the strength of the current, and, on the evening of the latter day, reached Dak-won-tsiek. At one place, called in Burmese the "Labyrinth of Rocks," it was the general opinion that we had reached an insurmountable obstacle; numerous enormous boulders of blackened granite studded the river; the swift current rushing between them

was lashed into white foam, and roared like a never-dying thunder-clap; but by taking everything out of the boats, we succeeded in hauling them through. By the meridian altitude of the sun, taken with an artificial horizon, I found Dak-won-tsiek to be in lat. 18° 25′ North.

My scouts having arrested one of the principal dacoits of a gang that had lately decoyed eight timber merchants with money for the purchase of timber from Moulmein, and attacked and murdered three of them on the Yoongzalen bank of the river, he was here tried, proved guilty, and hung on the same bank of the river where he committed his crime, and in sight of all passers.

On the two following days we cleared a piece of ground above Dak-won-tseik, pitched a tent that we had brought with us, and formed a camp commanding both the water and land routes. On the last-mentioned day, a Siamese officer, commanding a division of the Siamese force, that had marched from the town of Zimmay on hearing that the dacoits had burnt and plundered their town of "Huime-loongyee," arrived, and at once paid me a friendly visit. He informed me that two of the chiefs were on their way to welcome us, as had been agreed to before I left Moulmein.

During the four following days, I took small parties in different directions into the interior of the Yoongzalen Division, with the view of quieting the country, driving out the plunderers, and inducing the villagers to return to their deserted houses and settle down. They admitted that they had complied with many demands made by the dacoits in the name of Men-Loung, of whom they personally knew nothing, but pleaded their inability to resist; and that, if they did not give to the dacoits rice and food, they not only took it by force, but burnt the villages and sold the inhabitants into captivity.

On the 26th, the two Siamese chiefs arrived, according to expectation, and also those of my own party whom I had despatched overland. Their arrival was hailed with delight, for the men with me had been almost without food for three days. We had consumed all we had brought with us, and the country seemed unable to yield a basket of rice, so much had it suffered from the dacoits. The Siamese chiefs and myself exchanged friendly visits, and as one of them could speak the Burmese language fluently, we were able to converse freely without the necessity of an interpreter—a most advantageous circumstance. They willingly

and heartily entered into the project of punishing and driving out the dacoits, and agreed to place guards at posts that I indicated on their bank of the river, with the object of capturing dacoits that might seek refuge from the Yoongzalen in their territory. For the present, I posted a guard of fifty men with canoes at Dak-won-tsiek to patrol the river, and thus the whole of the eastern outlets from the Yoongzalen, in which direction it is supposed Meng-Loung escaped the preceding year, were closed.

The object of our next endeavour was to guard in like manner all the northern routes out of the Yoongzalen—a result that must completely cut off the retreat of any enemy in that division, as the British territory lay on both the west and south of it; and this was to be done without disturbing Meng-Loung's position, in accordance with the instructions I had received. I found that every grain of rice and every article of food that we needed must be carried with us, and, therefore, only a very small number of men could be taken up the river route; besides which, rafts were impracticable further up, which limited very much my means of transport by water; and it was very doubtful whether the loaded canoes could proceed

at all. Under these circumstances, the Siamese chiefs from Zimmay urged the advantage of the route through their territory by Huime-loongyee and Poong-met-seh, and even made it out shorter than it proved to be—partly, I believe, from a desire to show the surrounding tribes the good understanding that existed between the British and their government, and partly from the effect that it would have on the dacoits that had devastated their country, and whom they identified with the Karennees (Red Karens), the most warlike of the surrounding mountain clans. They offered either to accompany me, or to provide me with guides; and as the most northern boundary of the Yoong-zalen *had to be* attained, I determined, at any rate, to adopt their advice as to the route.

On the 30th January we despatched back to Moulmein all the sick, and leaving the guard of fifty men already mentioned, posted, crossed the Salween with about 350 men, and in two days' long march, over high hills, and through dense forests, generally along the bed of a stream, or by a deer-path, without meeting a soul, or a vestige of human occupation, we reached Huime-longyee "Tat," a fort where the two chiefs were residing with their force. Nearly the whole town had been burned down by the same

dacoits that had ravaged the Yoongzalen, under their chiefs "Nga-kan-bah," and "Dalahe;" but little injury was done to the extensive stockade, which forms a parallelogram, with irregularly shaped wooden towers at intervals, capable of being easily defended against musketry alone. It is situated on an extensive open plain, surrounded by distant mountains, and watered by a fine stream, of some magnitude, and of the clearest water, along the banks of which, and those of its numerous tributaries, teak of magnificent growth is the prevailing forest tree. The Siamese troops in the fort were without drill or uniform, but appeared orderly, and were pretty well armed with English muskets and "dahlways."

The high level plateau on which the place is situated had evidently yielded a rich harvest of rice, maize, and sugar-cane; various fruit-trees proved the climate to be equable; game of all descriptions, particularly hares, abounded; indeed, the deer of the country, *Cervus russa*, and the wild hog, afforded us sport throughout the whole expedition, and proved a great assistance to our commissariat. During our halt here for one day, I easily prevailed on the chiefs to right several wrongs that had been done to British timber traders in former years. In a friendly con-

versation, I pointed out the evils of the slave trade carried on at Zimmay with the surrounding independent tribes, and impressed upon them the fact that their purchasing captives made the capture and sale of prisoners a profitable employment, and became a leading cause of the present disturbed state of the country. They admitted the truth of what I said, and promised amendment; but I am convinced it will be no easy matter to put an end to this worst of slave trades, for it is encouraged at Bancock, where most of the captives are sent for sale.

We marched again on the 3rd of February, and reached Poong-met-seh in five long marches, over a very difficult country. The tops of the lofty mountains here appeared crowned with fir-trees, which grew in clumps; the valleys, watered by numerous mountain rills, producing the wild citron, the orange, and a new variety of plantain, with strange tapering stem. All around bore marks of the devastating freebooter; the Karens' hamlets were burnt, their granaries rifled, and the dead lay unburied by the wayside. "My advance-guard surprised a party of dacoits in the act of pillage near Poong-met-seh. I prevented their being fired on, and tried to communicate with them, as they appeared from their dress to be principally Red Karens, but they took to flight,

leaving their booty of grain and elephants behind them. These Red Karens dress in loose short trousers, often red, black wadded jackets, and wear their hair long, fastened in a knot on the top of the head, and frequently a very broad-brimmed straw hat.

I found Poong-met-seh to be in lat. 19° 7′ 20″, situated on a very elevated but well-watered plain; charred and blackened posts marked the sites of three very large villages. Here it was, that Men-Loung took refuge when driven out of the Yoongzalen a year ago. The chief "Nga-kan-bah" (called by the Siamese "Ipan"), who appears to have been nearly independent, adopted with all his villagers Men-Loung's cause, attacked and burnt "Huime-longyee," and made two successful forays into the Yoong-zalen, carrying off many captives. The Siamese, therefore, had retaliated by burning Poong-met-seh, though it is within their own territory, the inhabitants were principally Young-thoos (Hill men) and Red Karens.

After one day's halt to recruit our elephants, we marched on the 9th February for a "ghat" on the Salween River, over a more easy route than we had yet travelled, but still mountainous, with intervals of forest or brushwood. About 4 P.M., my flanking

parties consisting of Karen hunters, found some twenty well-armed dacoits in ambuscade upon the pathway by which we were advancing. I made a slight detour with the advanced guard and completely took the ambuscade by surprise, and made 18 prisoners, with 9 excellent English fowling-pieces, swords, spears, dahlways, silver mounted knives, &c., without bloodshed. On cross-examination they admitted that they were out on a plundering expedition; that my advance-guard two days previous at Poong-met-seh had been taken for a Siamese party, and that they were lying in ambuscade for them; that they had been indulging in their favourite liquor, a kind of "sham-shoo" distilled from rice; and that they were not accustomed to flanking parties and advance guards—hence their misfortune. I disarmed them and put them in charge of a guard.

The following day in the afternoon we reached the Salween River at a place called Tseik Gyee (great ghat). On the opposite side of the river, our own location being on the Siamese bank, we observed a strong encampment, with large and well-built houses. The position was a short distance north of the old Burmese, now British boundary, with the Karen territory, and appeared to contain from 400 to 500 armed men. Shortly after our arrival a considerable

party, armed, crossed over and demanded the release of the eighteen prisoners we had made the day previously. In this armed embassy, so to call it, were Burmese, Hill men, Siamese, and Red Karens, the chief or spokesman being of the latter tribe, who are held to be the most fierce and warlike of the many tribes inhabiting these mountainous tracts.

I was desirous of enlisting the Karennee chiefs on our side, and hoped to induce them to deliver up Men-Loung and the other dacoits, should they take refuge in their territory. The relative position of the people before me, I could only guess at. They assured me of a meeting with the chiefs, who had not, however, kept their appointment at or near this place, as had been agreed upon previously, stating that they would adopt willingly the side of order. All this I had to weigh in my own mind, and taking into consideration that the prisoners had been captured while plundering on Siamese ground, and that though I had guides from the Siamese chiefs, there was no man of sufficient rank to be entrusted with the prisoners, even should it be advisable to retain them in custody, I determined to deliver them up; but as they might attack me the following day, I concluded to retain their arms until I had communicated with the Karennee chiefs. However, on a

second and more polite request being made, I released my prisoners, who had not been bound, or even under personal restraint; and I explained to the spokesman that I should cross to the British boundary of the Yoongzalen Division, and there await the chiefs.

During the evening and part of the night of this day, large parties of armed men, evidently from some expedition, crossed through our camp to the opposite shore. They were insolent in the extreme, snatched food from, and even struck some of my men; and I had frequently to interfere personally to secure the forbearance of my followers. Large armed parties also crossed from Tseik Gyee camp, came before me brandishing their arms; and on being interrogated, vaunted that they had no chiefs, and "lived and did as they pleased." They were all more or less intoxicated. We had great difficulty in getting rid of them quietly, and were kept on the alert all night. I had evidently been "done" by a band of dacoits.

The following day I learnt from some Siamese traders that the armed men, in all upwards of 200, that had flocked through our camp the previous evening, were actually returning from an expedition into the Yoongzalen. A young Karennee chief named

"Duré," of Noung Kwé village, a little lower down, paid me a respectful visit. He stated that he was most anxious to suppress dacoity, but that he was quite unable to cope with the large bands that ravaged the country, and that he had no authority in Tseik Gyee, which was indeed most evident, as all his villagers had deserted their houses for fear of the marauders. I now found the absolute truth of what had been before reported to me, viz., that "Tsan Praten," one of the head chiefs of Karennee, was then in the Yoongzalen, on an expedition with at least some 400 armed men.

At earliest dawn the following morning, everything being prepared to make the passage of the river lower down, and occupy the northern passes of the Yoongzalen, it was reported to me that two of my volunteers had strayed from camp, against the strictest orders, and were prisoners, with their arms, in the dacoits' camp. I despatched a myothoogyee (head man) in a canoe, with a polite request that they might be given up; but to this message they returned a saucy refusal, and even demanded that we should not leave our present camp. On a second message being sent, one of the captives broke loose, and rushed down to the canoe, pursued by a number of men, armed with spears and swords, hooting;

but having successfully evaded them, he brought information that he and his companion had been tortured, and that the latter was being murdered. I had been most anxious to avoid a rupture with these dacoits, as they occupied ground beyond our supposed boundary; but I should have put myself in an unbecoming position, and that before the Karennee chief and Siamese guides, had I left a man in their hands to be murdered, without even an alleged offence. I at once sent the simple ultimatum to give up my follower unhurt, or I should come and take him. The answer was only a shout of derision, and the first shot fired.

The dacoits' position was close to the river, on a high steep bank, protected by a chevaux-de-frize. I ascertained that it contained upwards of 500 armed men and no women. The breadth of the river between us was about 450 yards, the stream very deep and rapid. I could obtain only four of the smallest canoes; but by crossing to a long sand-bank in the river, we approached to within about 300 yards of their position; and on this bank I drew up the greater part of my men, and placed the howitzers and wall-pieces in position. The dacoits fired, but without effect, their shots generally passing over us; and in a very few minutes we replied with shell and

wall-pieces, which soon threw them into great confusion, though they continued to hold a high point, where they were protected by large trees a little above our ground. Here they prepared to receive a party of forty-five picked men that I took with me in the four canoes, being the greatest number they would carry; but, instead of landing at the usual place, immediately below them, where they evidently expected us, we shot down the swift current between the enemy and our own guns, as preconcerted. By this manœuvre, their fire was rendered harmless, being upwards of 100 yards distant; and when they left their cover and ran along the bank, to prevent us landing 200 yards lower down, they were exposed to the fire of our guns on the opposite bank. Their pieces also had now to be reloaded; and before they could accomplish this, we had landed and dashed up the bank with a loud cheer; so that we were on a level with them and close up before drawing a trigger. Seeing our advantage, they instantly broke, and took to precipitate flight, leaving several dead on the ground. We burnt the camp, and recovered our man; but so mutilated and tortured, that he soon expired. I ought to mention that the first two men up the bank were two volunteers, Moung Shoay Kee, a Burman of Beeloogyoon and a Sheikh, Soonder Sing.

I found in the dacoits' position a party of Shan traders, with a large quantity of valuable merchandise, who said that they had been kept prisoners until they complied with demands larger than they could pay. This presented a fortunate opportunity of showing that we were on the side of good faith and order; therefore, I took care that all their property was secured to them, had it carried over to the opposite shore, and started them on the road to Huimeloongyee, with a letter to the Siamese chief.

I also at once addressed a letter to the "Nyvé Toung" (Silver Hill) chief, and other Karennee chiefs, who, I believed, were in their respective villages, showing the conduct of the dacoits at Tseik Gyee, and the result, reminding them of the loss that must accrue to them by the almost total stoppage to commerce caused by the dacoits; and calling upon them to adopt the cause of order, and assist in the destruction of Men-Loung and his followers. For these Karennee clans, I may observe, are independent of any government, and usually of each other,—and the destruction of the stronghold which was under the immediate command of the two notorious dacoit leaders, Aga-Khan-Bah and Dalahé, could only affect them by proving that a British force found their impenetrable country no barrier, and that it was at

their own manifest peril if they protected freebooters and plunderers.

The day following this affair, we marched three or four miles down the river, to the deserted village of Noung Kwé, belonging to the chief "Duré," as before stated. I took especial care that the village should not be burned or injured; and the same day we swam the elephants over, and crossed the Salween in small canoes, taking up our position on the most northern boundary of the Yoongzalen Division, and occupying with pickets in ambuscade all the passes leading out of it. The numerous bands of dacoits scattered all over this district soon heard of the destruction of their stronghold with surprise and terror, for they had never dreamt of a British force in these regions; and day and night the marauders came trooping over the country, dragging with them captive the white Karens of the Yoongalen, many of them young women and children, torn from their parents, with their arms so tightly fastened behind their backs that the cords cut deep into the flesh; while their little naked feet left blood-marks on the sharp stones, as with tears and agony they were goaded along by the point of a ruffian's spear. A great many of these parties fell into the hands of my pickets, and were very severely punished, and their

captives released, particularly on two occasions, when the guard was under the command of a Burman leader, Moung Shoay Kee, and under my immediate supervision. In both instances, the chief of the dacoits was shot; and in one, more than half of the party were either killed or wounded. In every instance, I may add, the dacoits were well armed, and offered a stout resistance.

The chief "Tsan-pra-ten" advanced from the centre of the Yoongzalen with the greatest caution; we found his advance guard, with ponies and elephants, a day's march in advance of him. They took to flight at the first onset, leaving everything in our possession; and so great was the panic inspired that "Tsan-pra-ten," with nearly double my available force, fled by night, with much difficulty, down the bed of the "Pah Kyoung" stream, and escaped over to the Siamese bank of the Salween.

During the four following days, I made daily marches of fifteen to eighteen miles; detaching parties on both flanks, sweeping the country of the numerous bands of armed plunderers, that had invaded it; and at length reached a spot on the sources of the Yoongzalen stream, called "Toungwine," a small circular valley surrounded by mountains, where it is supposed Men-Loung and followers had wintered during

the last rains. Here we found a considerable camp, or cluster of mat and wooden buildings, that had been evacuated at least several days. Up to this period, I had made every endeavour, but had failed to get the least reliable information regarding Men-Loung.

I then marched west, right over the most northern mountains of the Yoongzalen, close by the southern point of Toungoo, conciliating the Karens, when I could induce them to come in to within one long march of Kyonkee, near the Sittoung river. At this point I wheeled about, and marched in an easterly direction, sending out scouts and parties right and left, so as effectually to scour the whole country, which I found most inaccessible, the mountains rising to 5,000 or 6,000 feet, crowned with clumps of fir-trees, and intersected by numerous mountain streams. Its fertility seemed very great; in some places there were old clearings of thousands of acres in extent and in the vicinity of the "Thailoot" (Betel-nut) stream, a tributary of the Yoongzalen river, we estimated that there had been sufficient hill rice cultivated to subsist 5,000 souls, but not a village was to be seen, and scarcely a Karen to be found. I was much surprised at the evident prosperity and cultivation that had lately existed here.

On the 23rd of February, after a long day's

march, we came upon the track of a considerable party of men, who had one pony not shod, apparently one woman, and had left tracks of spear shafts and muskets, all which corresponded with the vague reports I had received regarding Men-Lnoung. I at once selected forty of my strongest Karen volunteers, and set off in pursuit, leaving the elephants and main party to follow. In two days we traversed a distance that I estimated at sixty miles at the least, climbing up and down water-courses, over the steepest mountains and densest forests, where scarcely a goat could find footing. On the evening of the second day, with half my party far in the rear, we lost the trail in the beaten foot-path leading nearly south towards Beeling, and here threw ourselves down on the ground completely exhausted. The elephants and main party by another route did not join us till the 28th of February, near the Papoon pagoda, on the bank of the Yoongzalen.

We had now swept east and west the whole upper and central Yoongzalen Division, but had not once found any one who would or could give any fresh intelligence of the rebel Men-Loung. We had not left a single armed party or dacoit behind. The villagers gave information of them willingly, but not

one admitted having even seen Men-Loung, probably from a superstitious dread of him.

For several days past I had found the greatest difficulty in feeding my men; and as there appeared nothing more for us to do in the Yoongzalen Division, I commenced my homeward march right down the centre of it towards the mouth of the river, which I reached on the 4th of March, and from that point we returned to Moulmein in boats.

HEATHEN AND HOLY LANDS,

ETC.

PART II.

CHAPTER I.

TO CAIRO.

Departure from Tavoy for Egypt and the Holy Land—Call at Rangoon—The Great Pagoda—Prosperity of the Country—Call at Ceylon—Cingalese Budhism—The Priests and the Population—Contrast with Burmah—Arrival at Aden—Steaming up the Red Sea—Suez—Supposed Route of the Israelites—Travelling over the Desert—Arrival at Cairo—Learning the Language—Streets and Buildings of the City—Advantages of Donkey-riding—Lounging in the Bazaars—Fashionable Promenade—Caireen Servants—Antiquity of Cairo—Historical Retrospect—Regeneration of Egypt—Its present Government—Remains of Saladin's Wall—Supply of Water—Old Cairo—Roman Fort—Ancient Mosque—Curious Tradition—Isle of Rhoda—Nilometer—Fakeers—Tombs of the Memlook Sultans—Tomb of Mahomed Ali—Number of Mosques in Cairo—Mosque within the Citadel—Gama Tayloon—Hiring a Boat—Departure for Ethiopia.

It was after some years of perhaps too close an application to the desk for one who had been accustomed to rove at large with the trusty rifle, and had ever preferred rather "to hear the lark sing than the mouse squeak," that I left Tavoy on the trip I am about to describe, with the prospect before me of full two years' travel—a period more than sufficient for the accomplishment of my long-cherished desire to

visit the Holy Land. The happiness, I thought, would now be mine to make Jerusalem, for a time, my place of residence; to visit the Holy Sepulchre and the scene of our Saviour's passion; to wander through the land promised to the Israelites of old, even from Dan to Beersheba; pluck the fresh sweet rose on the plains of Sharon, and mark the various battle-fields of the lion-hearted Richard and his brave crusaders. Now, also, I would explore the strange antiquities of Egypt, and examine the wondrous remains of the ancient cities of the Pharaohs; not to mention what I might behold of other countries and towns famed in olden history or in oriental story.

At Rangoon, which I visited *en route*, the first object worthy of notice is the Shwé Dâgoon Phûrâ, termed by Europeans the "Great Pagoda." This building is of vast size, and, although it displays but little architectural science, it is not devoid of a certain grandeur and symmetrical beauty of appearance. The view from it of the many-mouthed Irrawaddy, the far expanse of Delta and the town of Pegu, with its pagoda surmounted by a gilt "tee" or parasol, is certainly very well worthy of admiration. The Burmese destroyed their town of Rangoon during our last war, before it was attacked

by the British force; even the trees and gardens were levelled to prevent our approach to the great pagoda, which they had converted into a citadel. This gave the opportunity of laying out the new town of Rangoon in accordance with European ideas; and now the clean, open quays and broad streets, on either side of which well-built brick houses are rapidly rising, give promise of its speedily becoming one of the finest of our Eastern cities, while its commerce bids fair soon to rival that of Calcutta or Bombay.

This new kingdom of Pegu, that has been lately annexed to our British possessions in the East, will in all probability become one of the most valuable provinces in our Indian empire. It comprises the whole Delta of the Irrawaddy, which is very fertile, and better populated than our other Burmese provinces. There are two very good ports, Bassein, or Dalhousie, and Rangoon; and the exports of teak timber, and rice of finest quality, will be very large; the value of exports and imports for 1857 amounted to upwards of two millions sterling, and the sum is annually and steadily increasing. The total revenue of the province for last official year was upwards of forty thousand pounds sterling, and it also rapidly augments from the most legitimate

causes, viz., increase of commerce and cultivation of waste lands. A fine opening has been made for the sale of piece goods and Manchester wares of all sorts, large consignments of which will find a ready sale up the Irrawaddy, and by the same route into inland China.

Having left Tavoy in the middle of September, I arrived at Point de Galle, Ceylon, on the 14th of October, and, taking a short trip inland, saw some fine plantations of palm and cinnamon. The cocoa-nut palm seems to thrive well here. Though so close to India, this island differs widely from it in many respects. It is much less oriental in appearance and in the manners of the inhabitants. Many European habits and customs have crept in. The natives are Budhists, like the Burmese, and I visited some of their largest temples, and met some of the priests, who, when they knew I came from Burmah, were eager to question me regarding the forms of worship and life in the monasteries there. Religion, in Ceylon, is not of so pure a type as Budhism in Burmah; for, though I observed the same representation of Godama in each temple, it was accompanied with the Hindoo idols of "Shree Krishna" and "Davee."

The Cingalese priests are very attentive and hos-

pitable, and more than one desired to accompany me to Burmah. Some Budhist priests had lately arrived here from Arracan—a visit that had not taken place for many years previously. I could with ease enter into conversation with them, which astonished the Cingalese, whose language has no affinity with the Arracanese ; and as they themselves could not maintain a conversation with their guests, they were most earnest in their endeavours to find out through my agency all that could be known of them.

The men of Ceylon are weak and most effeminate-looking, their style of dress, resembling a petticoat, and mode of dressing their hair (long, and tied in a knot at the back of the head), is absurdly so. They live in wretched huts built on the ground, and are poorly clothed, particularly in comparison with the natives of Burmah, who, indeed, live better, and are better housed and clothed than other Asiatics, especially those that have been longest under British rule.

A few days more, and I am at Aden, and this is "Arabia Felix." But what can there be of enjoyment, or what cause of happiness, in these barren rocky hills? Not a green tree, not a plant is to be seen, as far as the eye can reach. The country all

round appears to have been thrown up by some volcanic eruption; and being wholly of igneous formation, is strange, and well worth examining, though no landscape could be less pleasing to the eye—no land could look more thirsty and unfruitful.

We steamed up the Red Sea at a great pace, with a strong cold wind in our favour, escaping the heat so often complained of. We were just six days steaming from one end of the long narrow sea, the straits of Bab'd-el-Mandel, to the opposite end, at Suez. Unlike what one expects to find in this inland sea, the waves ran high, all ports closed, and wet decks on board a 2,000 tons steamer. Why is this sea termed the "Red?" It is so in French, Italian, and Arabic, as well as English, and by all ancient writers. Is it from the red coral by its shore? or from a pinkish substance like fish spawn that, each time traversed, I have remarked floating on its surface in large quantities. A name that occurs in so many languages, and at such different periods, could hardly have originated in accident.

When entering by the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb, the scene of alternate land and water caused by the three openings into the ocean, the islands thus formed, composed of blackest rock, unrelieved by a single tree or plant, upheaved at some former time

by an awful convulsion of nature, from her vast smouldering internal furnace, make up a landscape, not beautiful indeed, but strangely grand.

We arrived opposite Suez at night, but were soon paddled on shore in the little high-pressure steamer kept there to land the passengers from India, and reached the hotel built for their accommodation. An odd life the keeper of this place must live; four days in the month his house is full to suffocation—half a dozen in every room, and not a single soul to speak to beyond a few idle Arabs the remaining twenty-six days.

There is little to interest the visitor in the town of Suez. It consists of a few Arab houses and huts, and the country round is sand and desert. Nevertheless, a day or so may be well spent wandering about its environs, for somewhere here, doubtless, the miraculous passage of the sea was made by the Israelites. The summit of Mount Sinai is seen from the approach to Suez by the Red Sea. The Arabs have traditions of the passage to this day; and the place called Wadee-el-Arraba is "the valley of the chariots." There is a ford across the sea even now at low water, where the tide rises and falls some five or six feet. It is on the direct road from Egypt, just below which there is a small island still called

by the natives of the Desert, Gezeerak-el-Yahood, the "Island of the Jews." I wandered on the parched, thirsty beach: everything was salt, even the well water. The only sweet water to be had is brought on camels all the way from Cairo.

A railroad having been made, everybody is aware how easily one can now cross the eighty-two miles of desert between Suez and Cairo; but it was not quite the same six years ago. The traveller then enjoyed as he could fourteen hours in a van drawn over the stones and sand by four little horses or mules. As the team proceeded at a gallop, you were jolted into your neighbour's lap; and, jumping up, perhaps, with a thousand apologies, your hat was knocked over your eyes by coming in contact with the roof. But, on the other hand, we had the advantage of a journey divided into six stages, and at each we refreshed the inward man, which quite spoiled the romance of desert travelling in the yet older way, on the back of a camel, or Arab horse; with the sand for a couch, and the starlit heavens for a canopy at night. For myself, though I looked forward with eager pleasure to the wild Arab life, I would not refuse the use of the four-horsed van, the staging bungalows, the refreshments, and the cigars, that brought us into the Uzbekeah of Grand Cairo, about nine at night, some

of us very jovially, to judge by the well-chorused songs.

I found Cairo, or more properly Misr El Kaherah, "the City of Victory," a very interesting and amusing place, say for a couple of months during the cold weather. The plan I adopted, and one I would recommend to any traveller who has time, was to get a monshee at once, and set earnestly to work to acquire the language of the country. One may "do" Egypt" very well, with Murray and a dragoman, but the greater part of the interest is lost if unable to interrogate, and to associate with the inhabitants of the country, and thereby acquire the endless scraps of information and amusement that would be otherwise lost.

There is much to interest the visitor in the streets and bazaars of Cairo. One is always stumbling on something quaint. The buildings are not so magnificent as in Delhi or Lucknow, but much more engaging. The best way of wandering about them is on a donkey, which among other advantages will keep one's feet out of the mud. These animals are, besides, proverbially good in Egypt; they are very docile, and will go through any place where a man can go, while the donkey boy prevents one losing the way without the nuisance of

a dragoman; *àpropos* of which a Levantine proverb well says, that the three nuisances of the East are plague, fire, and dragomen. In Eastern costume then, and mounted on a donkey, the traveller may go where it pleases him, and make observations where he likes, without being a general mark for the eyes and suspicions of all the inhabitants.

I never tired of wandering about the bazaars, so narrow that two men can scarcely walk abreast (this discomfort, however, is not without compensation, as it serves to keep the street cool), and of the thousand-and-one (to use an Arabic expression) oriental odds and ends to be examined, and if you please, purchased. The latter is by no means a necessary consequence of such visits, for to sit cross-legged on the board of the little shop, smoke a chibouk with the grey-bearded Mahomedan of the olden school, and listen to the gossip that amuses a Caireen, is often agreeable to both parties, more particularly if the traveller should have a little oriental story to offer in return for a complacent display of such heterogeneous articles, perhaps, as chain-armour, Fez caps, Damascus blades, silk scarfs, abâes, turbans, amber mouth-pieces, Constantinople goods, and embroidered slippers. Other resources for the man of leisure are not wanting either. One may hear all

the Caireen scandal at the barber's stall, or saunter to the enervating luxurious vapour baths and be splashed, rubbed down, ducked, and shampooed till we feel at least a stone lighter.

The finest part of Cairo, though the most Europeanized, is undoubtedly the square with the gardens, walks, and trees in the centre, called the Uzbekéah. Here in the cool of the evening may be met the principal society, and in the more retired walks, even the veiled hareem of the jealous Moslem, who when opportunity offers are not unskilled in shooting an eyelash arrow from the eyebrow bow.

I hired several servants, but with the exception of a good old one-eyed cook, they all thought much more of *doing me*, than *my bidding;* they are more lazy than our Indian servants, and not nearly so tractable and well-conducted; when caught in the act of cheating they are impudent instead of conciliatory in their behaviour.

It is written that "El Kaherah," which Europeans have metamorphosed into Cairo, was founded by a general appointed by Ali, the husband of Mahomed's fair daughter Fatima, but the present town was not built till some 360 years after the Hejira, probably during the Fatimite dynasty. For Egypt, therefore, it is quite a mushroom of a town, only some 885

years old; but it was built on the ruins of much older cities, near the site of the earliest temple palaces of the Pharaohs, and we may suppose of the world. Here first appeared with faltering, retiring, steps the early civilization that soon left it in disgust. Here was enacted that scene so touching, so truly natural, that has moistened the eyes of millions, the history of Joseph and his brethren; here the most mysterious of all rivers, the great source of fruitfulness in a land that without it would in three years be but a desert, flows on greasy, turbid, and muddy, from age to age the same, by the gigantic structures of the Pharaohs, by the land of Goshen and the present city of Saladin; unchanged it has rolled on since the Israelites slaved on its banks, since Thermuthis, Pharaoh's daughter, bathing in its turbid stream, found God's chosen leader for *His* people, and since it bore on its broad bosom the gorgeous galleys of the voluptuous Cleopatra. On the banks of the Nile," or "Neel," dawned the earliest knowledge of the human race; here science achieved its first triumphs, and power asserted its supremacy. Its shores have also felt the curse, and have seen the lowest degradation, misery, and grief. When, we ask, will Egypt be again enrolled among the civilized nations of the earth? when will the light of truth dawn upon her

barbarous people? The present state of the country seems to invite an energetic progressive race to occupy it, and be the means of working out its regeneration. Its present effete, venal, decayed Government cannot last long: it is only propped up, and rests now on the memory of Mahomed Ali's tyranny.

At Cairo I made several agreeable acquaintances, of different creeds and race, with whom I visited the edifices and scenes of note and interest. We rode to look at the old wall erected by the warrior Saláh-e-deen, the Saladin of the Crusaders, but it is so built over that it is not easy to trace. Here, however, still stands a monument of the Saracenic style of fortification, the now well-named "Tower of Filth," and the old ports or gates partly buried by the rubbish and offal of the town; the "Gate of Victory," *leading to the tombs*—some built of fragments brought from the cities of Heliopolis and Memphis—while through the town passes a ditch of liquid mud, termed out of courtesy a canal, conveying water and fever to its two hundred thousand inhabitants.

The Frank, the Jew, the Copt, the Moslem, each has his quarter separated by gates and iron bars at night, protected by curs, wonderfully hostile to the human species, considering that they occupy the ground-floor or sewers of the same abode.

We found our way to Old Cairo or Fostat (which may be interpreted "a tent"), where an old Roman fort is well worthy of inspection. Here once resided the people of Babylon, that Diodorus records were taken captive by the great Egyptian warrior, Sesostris. The fortress has all the peculiarities of the Roman construction. Its round towers and strong walls of vast thickness are of red brick, and the eagle is still seen carved over the gateway; but within, in place of the stalwart legions, is a little parish of Copts, primitive Christians, but worshipping, I fear, their patron, St. George, who is represented on a white horse, attacking a monstrous green dragon. Near this enclosure is one of the oldest, earliest mosques, consisting of a plain open court, surrounded by a colonnade. This simple structure is a curious specimen of Saracenic architecture in its infancy; there is an ancient tradition attached to it, a prophecy not unlikely to be fulfilled, to wit, that the power of the Moslem and the now tottering edifice will crumble and fall together.

We crossed in a boat, one fine cool morning, to the island of Rhoda, opposite Old Cairo, where the orange and citron flourish. It seems the most inviting garden round Cairo unclaimed by the

Pasha; and here is the far-famed Nilometer, a slender stone column in the centre of a well, graduated with cubits. Not much worthy of note in this, it may be thought; but then we read of a Nilometer measuring the rise and fall of the Nile in the times of the Pharonic kings. Herodotus mentions that the measurement of the river's rise, to calculate the probable result of the harvest, was part of their priestcraft; and, Strabo describes a Nilometer on the Isle of Elephantiné: to all which the imagination is led wandering back.

In Old Cairo the curious may visit the colleges of the Fakeers or Durvesh, and on certain days see these austere mountebanks whirl round and dance. I met and conversed with some Fakeers from Delhi amongst them, who were very glad to receive a few piastres, and to hear their native language; they had wandered all the way by land, and had been some years *en route.*

As may be supposed, I was not many days in Egypt without visiting the stupendous Pyramids; and that fanciful emblem of the union of intellect and physical strength, the Sphinx. But at this season (October) the waters of the Nile had spread far over the harvest-yielding land, and I deferred a minute inspection till my return from Upper Egypt.

The tombs of the Memlook Sultans, with fine minarets and mosques attached, are magnificent monuments of those descendants of Circassian girls, torn from their mountain homes by ruthless slave-dealers. But their sons lived to rule with iron tyranny the offspring of those who wrought their mothers' shame; and, as bold warriors, twice to hurl back the Tartars from Europe under the fierce Tamerlane. Near them lies a well-met comrade, Mahomed Ali, Pasha of Egypt and Syria, who, if we had but wisely stayed our hands, would have won Constantinople, and raised up a strong government, and formed a barrier that would have defied the hordes of Russia for many a long day, and in all human probability would have prevented the Crimean war.

Here rest the remains of the Caliph E. Salah Jeyoob, who defeated the Crusaders under St. Louis of France, and made captive the Christian monarch; but from whose son the Memlooks snatched the throne, which a long line of their descendants occupied. Their tombs, with Gothic arch and richly-clustered pillars, with Alhambra-like fret-worked entrance, are still the finest monuments of the departed Sultans of Egypt.

The number of mosques in Cairo is said to be

no less than four hundred; and though I will not vouch for the statement, there are certainly a very great number compared with the population. They are not so beautiful as some I have seen in other Eastern cities; and that within the citadel, upon which some fabulous sum of money has been lately spent, is not to be compared to the ancient architecture of the Saracens, though its tall, slender minarets of marble are certainly elegant. This mosque was erected by Mahomed Ali, on the site of a very ancient edifice, called Joseph's, and in it his remains are deposited. From the pointed pinnacle of the Muezen's tower the most perfect bird's-eye view of Egypt may be had; and it was here, within the citadel wall, that Mahomed Ali removed the Memlooks from his path by a cold-blooded massacre, simply because they were too powerful for his all-grasping ambition.

The Mahomedans in this town are not particularly bigoted; no objection was ever made to my entering a mosque; and Gama Tayloon is certainly well worth a visit. It is said to be built on the plan of the mosque at Mecca, and is the most ancient in Egypt; the numerous arches, gracefully extending from the spring, and gradually rounding to a point at the crown, are supported on numerous rows of

light, elegant columns. These colonnades surround an open square, where the faithful meet to pray. This beautiful architectural work, these elegantly-pointed arches, were built in A.D. 879, or about 300 years before the construction of the arch was known in England.

After a short stay at Cairo, I rode, one morning, to Boolak, a village on the river, almost joining the town, for the purpose of hiring a boat to proceed on a tour to Upper Egypt. Arranged along the shore were numerous high-decked boats with flat bottoms, much resembling the pinnace of the Ganges. The cabins of these boats are large, and would be comfortable were it not that they are built of numerous small pieces of wood badly joined together, which enables vermin of all sorts to find a convenient residence in them. Choosing one that seemed likely to afford sufficient room, and was yet not too unwieldy, I went on board and found the owner there, a Caireen of the old school, with a flowing turban, and beard reaching to his waist. We sat down on the divan round the principal cabin; he requested me to take the right-hand corner, and played the host by ordering pipes and coffee for two. We smoked and sipped, while I tried in vain to bring him to the point at issue—the hire of the boat. He lauded its power

of sailing, its size and its comfort, none of which I questioned, as he seemed to desire, if only to get up an argument, which must end in convincing me of its transcendent qualities; but he always evaded the one point, trusting to me to make a large offer. At last the subject was lost altogether in a maze of questions and answers about every conceivable thing, from the late Pasha Mahomed Ali's conquests to Ibrahimee dates; and I had risen to go when he said, "By the way, you will want a new chintz covering for the cushions." I answered, "Good!" and, at last, we came to an understanding; I offering one-half of what he first asked. We arranged to meet the following day, and enter into a written agreement.

All was at last satisfactorily settled; the boat was sunk for a night to kill the vermin; and then, being re-painted, and a new covering for the divan thrown into the bargain, a reis or captain, with crew of seven men, were selected and made over to me. I took two servants I had hired in Cairo, laid in a stock of provisions, and, with a fair north wind blowing, set sail and steered for Ethiopia.

CHAPTER II.

UP THE NILE.

The Pyramids—Object of the Builders—Universal object of Oriental Ambition—Sailing against the Current—Tracking—Study of Arabic—Arrival at Osioot—The Ancient Lycopolis—Mummies—Scenery of the Nile—Arabian Tradition—Climate of Upper Egypt—A Day's Enjoyment—"Gowel Kâtéen"—Temple of Antæus—Thebes—Esneh—Representation of Kneph—Level of the Temple—Secret Chamber—Progress of discovery in Egyptian Archæology—The French in Egypt—The Rosetta Stone—Arrival at the First Cataract—Agreeable Rencontre—Visit to the Second Cataract—Scenery of Ethiopia—The Mystery of the Nile—Names on the Rock—Return.

THE Pyramids soon lay before me, for the second time, but the Nile had risen unusually high this season, and mud and water surrounded the place; accordingly I deferred a minute examination of them till my return down the river. But what an extraordinary mass of building! what enormous amount of labour expended for no purpose of utility! Authors differ greatly as to the purpose for which these immense mounds of stone were erected, some even arguing that they were built to assist in astronomical research; but who that has lived for many years in

oriental countries, and has carefully studied their various languages, customs, and ideas, still unchanged, even though ages have rolled by, will doubt that these were built simply "nâm-ki-waste," to perpetuate the name of the builder, Pharaoh, priest, or king, or whatever his title may have been. The intention also of being laid, after death, within his work, and identified with its greatness, was most probably uppermost in the builder's mind; and for this futile notion—for the name of the builder has in most cases passed away—what hundreds of thousands of workmen must have been tyrannized over—for years succeeding years ground down to the very dust! The idea of doing *something*, from planting a tree to building the "Taje" at Agra, "nâm-ki-waste"—literally, "for sake of a name"—is uppermost in the mind of every Oriental, whether he be Budhist, Brahmin, or Mahomedan. With the warlike inhabitant of the North-west, the cringing, cunning natives of Lower Bengal and Southern Hindoostan, the gay, cheerful Burman, revengeful Malay, the obstinate though clever Chinaman, whether poor or rich, ALL have this one predominating desire; the modern Egyptians have it very strongly, and the expression is frequently in their mouths.

For four days we had a splendid north breeze, and sailed up the Nile against a strong current, day and night, at a good pace. We passed, with a flowing sheet, the towns of Bènesoo-ef and Bênessâh, and numerous villages; for I had determined on going right on so long as this wind lasted, and only land to take a morning or evening walk along the banks, keeping pace with the boat sailing; or, if otherwise inclined, agreeing with the reis, or captain, upon a place of meeting. I calculated from my map that we had come in this manner about 125 miles from Cairo. The river Nile, so far, is more interesting than beautiful, not so fine a river as the Ganges or Irrawaddy, but presenting a striking novelty in its green belt of cultivation, extending for a few hundred yards or more, in some places, on both sides, with the white sandy desert beyond. The current down is very powerful, and it requires a strong wind to make the boat sail against it; but I was sometimes obliged to make a man hold the sheet of our large lateen sail, and more than once he had to let it fly as the strong breeze swept down from the white stony hills of the desert, many of which are close up to the banks of the river.

On the fifth day a dead calm set in, and we then progressed very slowly by tracking, which has been

the usual way of going up this river for ages, and it is the same on the Ganges and other eastern rivers. The men walk along the bank, hauling the boat after them with a long rope, and make generally about fifteen miles a day. We thus passed the towns of Miniêh, Soàdee, Bênee, Hassân, and Mânfâloot, and finally reached Osioot, which is put down as 253 miles by the winding of the stream from Cairo. If any one, going up the Nile, should find the day too long,—and, when there is no wind, it is doubtless dull work being tracked along, day after day, through the same scene and without change of company,—I would recommend him to study Arabic, particularly if he or she intends to travel through Palestine and Syria, where it is the common tongue of all. He will be surprised to find how much more interesting even the thousand and one tales of the "Arabian Nights" are in the native Arabic than in the English translation; and the advantage of being able to converse directly with the people among whom one may be sojourning, without the aid of an interpreter, is so great as to be beyond computation. It not only greatly increases the enjoyment and lessens the expense of travel, but, what is better, it saves one's temper. Even if the Arabic tongue should at first prove a dry study, it will be soon found, what it was

to me, an amusement, when the ears begin to be opened to everything that is passing around; and then there is the satisfaction of getting rid of that unmitigated annoyance, a dragoman.

It was on the eighth day when we arrived at Osioot. The town is situated at a short distance from the bank of the Nile; it is principally interesting from its occupying the site of the ancient Lycopolis, the city where wolves were worshipped. The figure of their principal god, who is represented in the form of a man, with a wolf's head, is very common in ancient Egyptian sculpture. Numerous mounds and broken bricks still mark the spot of the old city; close to it there is a range of bare hills of lime-stone rocks in which are excavated catacombs. Here I found sculptures much defaced by time, but bearing evidence of former elegance. I wandered through the bazaars and town, which, next to Cairo, was the largest I had yet seen in Egypt. The mosques and minarets are handsome. We found the remains of a vast number of mummies in the tombs, and amongst them evidently portions of animals, as well as human beings; a portion of the head of an embalmed wolf or jackal, a bird resembling a common fowl, and even the large bones of an ox or cow; they all have the appearance of having been partially burnt.

We were now in Upper Egypt, and the governor of it resides in this town in a handsome country-house, of which there are a great number on the banks of the Nile, more European in style than Asiatic. The limestone rock hill before mentioned is a spur of the Lybian range of mountains, here advanced close to the river. The view from its summit of the valley of the "Neel," its verdant banks bounded on either side with the glaring, brazen desert, is strange and beautiful, yet to me it was not an alluring prospect. It struck me as something new and well worth seeing, but did not please my fancy like the wild forest scenery on the banks of the Salween or Tavoy rivers, and other beautiful streams in our Burmese provinces; and the smiling banks of the Ganges far surpass this in soft beauty.

According to Arabic story, the birds of Egypt make an annual pilgrimage to this hill, and leave one of their number to watch, perched on the top, till their return next year, when he is relieved by another. My rifle had no opportunity of attempting to break the talisman, for the ever watchful guardian was invisible. For two days in succession the breeze travelled to us languidly from the south, and we progressed very slowly, but the climate up the Nile during the cold weather is so really delightful that one scarcely

minds the delay; it is quite cool enough to be bracing and healthy, yet the pain of cold is here unknown, and robust health is soon restored to the worn constitution, by the absence of all disturbance, of anxiety, or care, or hope, or fear. The morning ramble with the gun—more to procure a brace of quail for the simple evening meal than with the idea of fatigue after sport—commences the day's enjoyment; then the book, the pencil, or the pen, passes away the pleasant hours, followed by the evening stroll through antique ruins, or oriental village, and last of all, such a cup of coffee and chibouk as only Arabia can provide. As the crowning felicity, how passing pleasant it is to enjoy perfect, unbroken, and above all *unreproachful* leisure!

After a few hours' fine northerly wind, we arrived at Gowel Kabeer, the ancient city of Antæopolis, the remains of which, with the temple of Antæus, are a confused mass of ruins; one very large stone has some hieroglyphic writing on it, which, according to a valuable work on the antiquities of ancient Egypt, are the names of Ptolemy Philopater and his queen Arsinoe; there is also a Greek inscription, in a very imperfect state, but sufficiently legible to show, according to Gliddon and others, that King Ptolemy and Cleopatra, and their son, built or re-

paired this temple. The place is also mentioned in heathen mythology as being the battle-field between Horus and Typhon, and here in the time of Osiris-Hercules is said to have killed Antæus. Nothing remains now of the temple, excepting heaps of stones and earth, with broken fragments of columns and mutilated hieroglyphics.

On the fifteenth day from Cairo we reached Thebes, the wonder of the world, and not the less so now that its stupendous temples are in ruins, at first sight of which sleep is banished from the intensely occupied mind. Anticipation is here at last equalled, nay, surpassed by the reality. Dreams of the long past vanquish the everyday mind; and the overwrought imagination wonderingly inquires, What were those groves of gigantic obelisks, columns, and pillars, works of immensity, frowning on the wonder-stricken visitor?—what is that lost power which must have been used to pile these monstrous stones one upon another?—where are the people that built them, and worshipped at the shrine they enclosed? Were there giants in those days? The doorways are large and high enough to let pass the loftiest genii with unbended head. Were they erected when the spirits of air sought the love of the daughters of men? For whom were they built?—for kings or priests, or for

potentates who united the kingship and priesthood in one person? What rare craft, or more than modern science aided them? What all-absorbing mythology did they teach the millions, so as to enforce such labour? Surely these wretched Egyptian fellahs are not *their* descendants! Here one can but saunter, and gaze, and dream. No one shall now tell by whom, or why, this Babel was raised; how these lofty towers were reared high in the face of the blazing, ever unclouded sun. But how the curse has descended on the land! What a comparison between these wretched mud hovels of to-day, and the stupendous ruins that seem to defy time; between the utter ignorance and debasement of the present and the science and art of the past. One *cannot* be disappointed with Thebes. The ruins exceed in wondrous magnitude and effect any preconceived idea. After two days I felt more bewildered among the labyrinth of pillars, obelisks, and fallen towers, than at first. The longer you gaze and ramble among them, the more you find to wonder at and admire.

Fearing, on the third day after my arrival, that the season would pass before I reached the second cataract, I determined to proceed on at once to the farthest point to be attained, and to inspect the wonders of ancient Thebes and its neighbourhood at

leisure on my return. Again, therefore, we pushed off from the bank, and with a strong fair breeze stemmed the current. We spent a whole day on our way up at Esneh, where there is a fine temple. It has been determined by the most learned *savans* that Esneh is the Latopolis, well known to the Greeks and Romans. Strabo mentions it, and says that it was so called from the worship of the "latus" fish, which he says "shared with Minerva the honours of the sanctuary." This is questioned by Sir Gardner Wilkinson, who gives Chonuphis or Kneph as the presiding deity. On examination of the sculptures and dedications of the portico, the carved fish, I remarked, seemed to abound. Kneph was also there. I have seen him represented, however, in all the temples that I have examined. He represents the "creative power."

The style of the architecture of the portico (almost the only portion of the temple now remaining) is truly imposing, and could not, I think, fail to call forth the admiration of the most indifferent spectator. The columns are most massive; no two have capitals alike; and the whole are covered with strange hieroglyphics. Three-fourths of the building is below the level of the ground outside, so that it makes little show exteriorly; but, as you descend

by the steps, with the light shining in from above, the effect is splendid. And in no way could the capitals of the columns be shown to better advantage. Wilkinson has supposed that the mounds of ruins of the old town have accumulated over the lower and back part of the temple. But, with great diffidence, I think he may have arrived too speedily at this conclusion; because, where the earth has been removed from the outer columns and walls, the external surface appears rough and uncarved, and was evidently not intended to be exposed to view. Also, as stated above, the elegance and grandeur of the inside is greatly enhanced by its present position; and why should the Egyptians not have had "tykannahs," as in India, their climate being equally hot. On the ceiling of this temple I remarked inscribed a zodiac of large dimensions, and curiously formed; and on the whole of the walls numerous figures were traced, from ram-headed gods and nude men and women to fish and insects, some of the gods and men of monstrous size.

We examined a small secret chamber inside, only lately found, and evidently designed for some purpose of superstition. Indeed, I could not imagine a place better suited to enable a crafty priesthood to work upon the weak minds of the people. Surely no

one with the least spirit for inquiry, or thirst for knowledge, can view the monuments of ancient Egypt without a desire to have a peep behind the "Isiac veil," to know something of the mystic hieroglyphics, the monstrous, curiously-delineated figures that frown upon the stranger from every temple, pillar, and tomb, that for 2,000 years baffled every inquiry, and rendered Egypt, her time-worn edifices, her ancient inhabitants, their religion, arts, sciences, language, and history, incomprehensible mysteries. These legends sculptured on the monuments of Pharonic civilization were until lately "a sealed book;" these annals, in themselves a history, that were "to the Romans" a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks "foolishness," are now being read. The seal has been broken, and the dark veil rent asunder by the enormous strides that human knowledge has made of late years.

It should not be forgotten that the joint ability of all the *savans* of Europe failed to unravel the mystic writings of Egypt, till the mighty genius of Napoleon opened a way, by subduing Moslem arrogance and intolerancy. By the patronage and assistance he afforded to the advancement of science and the arts, it is well known that Napoleon induced many of the most clever men in France to accom-

pany him to Egypt, and there directed their laborious efforts to the scrutiny of the country and its monuments. The key to the impenetrable mysteries of Egypt, to wit, the celebrated Rosetta stone, was found by one of the French engineer officers (M. Bouchard), and by one of the articles of the capitulation of the French at Alexandria, it and all objects collected by the French Institute of Egypt were delivered up to the British. This stone, which is now in the British Museum, bears three inscriptions, two being in the Egyptian language, though in distinct characters, the first in hieroglyphics; the sacred writing known probably alone to the priests; the second in "demotic," the "writing of the people;" and, lastly, the third in Greek, being a translation of the other two texts. The event recorded is the coronation of King Epiphanes, which took place at Memphis, 196 years B.C. Dr. Young, of Edinburgh, was the first to make out some of the hieroglyphic letters, and read the proper names, though he failed to carry his principles of interpretation beyond *the* stone. It remained for "Champollion le Jeune" to apply the system to every Egyptian writing.

On we sailed, or tracked, passing Edfoo, Kom Ombo, and the hill of Silsileh, till we reached Aswan, at the first cataract. Here I met and

joined two English tourists, Valentine Elwes, Esq., and Nelson Rycroft, Esq., who proved most agreeable companions and hospitable friends. This fortunate occurrence greatly enhanced the pleasures of the tour in Upper Egypt, and confirmed me in the idea that the best travelling companion, as a rule, is he with whom the chances of the journey may make you acquainted. Under these circumstances you feel independent of one another, and can separate at once when inclinations lie different ways, the assurance of which probably tends to make wishes and opinions coincide.

We passed the Rapids, spent a day on beautiful, unearthly Philoe, and then away on into the burning lands of Ethiopia, past Derr, its capital, and Aboo Symbal, on till we reached Wadee Halfeh, just below the second cataract, on the thirty-second day from Cairo. The following morning, at earliest dawn, we set off for the Fall, armed with our rifles, some biscuits, and a basket of Ibrahamee dates—a kind most highly prized even in Egypt, the land of dates. At first we embarked in a crazy little boat, afterwards we proceeded by land across the desert, which gave us a few hours of hot and heavy walking, by reason of the softness of the sand, before we reached a precipice overhanging the rapids. From

this point we had a wild, magnificent view far into the burning solitudes of Ethiopia. Below us were the white waters lashed into foam, as they swept along under numerous isles of blackened rocks piled in irregular masses. Gazing due south into the sterile wilderness, where not even a fowl of the air is seen to wing its lonely way; all was still and hushed in painful solitude towards the sources of this ever most mysterious river, whose first spring of life no man has yet been known to reach. Does some fiery dragon bar the way to this veiled Isis, or Guardian Nymph of the source-forming fountains of the Nile? Or well may the imagination conjure up the Sphinx jealously watching over her virgin daughter, that mortal eyes may not behold her in her spell-bound home in the Mountains of the Moon!

This hill of sandstone rock appears to be the turning point for most travellers who have reached thus far, and many well-known names are here carved on the hard stone; those of 1800 and 1812 looking as fresh as if cut but yesterday, so dry and hard is the atmosphere. Here may be distinctly read the names of Belzoni—that most successful of tomb-hunters—Wilkinson, Lindsay, and Warburton. Elsewhere, from the Emperor Hadrian down to the Smiths, Joneses, and Robinsons of the present day,

many have had the bad taste to write their names on the sculptured monuments of Egypt; but here on the desert rock we thought we might be permitted the little vanity of leaving our mark, and we added our names to those of former sojourners in this distant land.

After taking a last look, from the top of the hill, at scorched Ethiopia, we descended, and set out with two of her rude swarthy sons, to make a detour through the desert, and returned to our boat by moonlight, without seeing more of the timid gazel than their numerous foot-prints in the sand. We rose early the following morning, and taking our guns, walked a long distance over the desert on the right bank of the river, through a valley called the "Lions" by the natives, but without seeing any wild animal, not even a deer, and returned late to the boat, with a couple of wilk ducks and a large eagle; the latter measuring upwards of nine feet from tip to tip of his wings.

On our return we found the crew had taken down the long spars of the boat, and made all ready for a start downwards. We had reached our *Ultima Thule* to the southward, so bade adieu to the wild solitudes of Africa.

CHAPTER III.

TEMPLES OF EGYPT AND NUBIA.

Northwards again—The Temple of Aboo-Symbal—Colossal Statue of Sesostris—Deities represented in the Temples—Figure of Re—Figure of Hanooman—Beautiful Figure of Isis—The Sacred Cow—View from the Hill-top—Temple at Derr—Dakke—Egyptian Magic—The lost Wisdom of Antiquity—Gerf Hoosain—Worship of Phtha—Island of Philoe—Granitic Rocks—Ancient Quarries—Produce of the Country—Irrigation of Nubia—The Berberee People—Heavy Taxation of the Country—A Moonlight Ramble in Philoe—The Temple of Isis—The Crux Ansata—Secret Chambers of the Temple—Architecture of the Columns—Singular Defect in Construction—Pharaoh's Bed—General Aspect of Philoe—Shooting the Cataract—Egyptian Naiads—The Island of Elephantiné—Ancient Temple—A Swan—Strabo's Well—The Ancient Granite Quarries of Syene—Temple of Kom-Ombos—Mountain of the Chain—Remains at Edfee—Connection of the Greek and Egyptian Mythology—Atmosphere of Egypt—Fertility of the Soil.

Our boat was soon under weigh, but now with her head down stream; and the strong current swept us along towards the cool north. Next day we reached the vast temple of Aboo-Symbal, which is by far the most interesting in Nubia, and certainly *one of the finest* on the Nile. It is entirely excavated in the living rock. Close to it is a second

temple, both of the time of Ramesis the Great, who was the second king of that name, and the supposed Sesostris of the Greeks.*

There are many highly-finished sculptures of battle-scenes and of the conqueror's return in triumph, offering his prisoners and spoil to the gods. At the entrance to the temple, there are four of the most gigantic, but, at the same time, beautiful Colossi, found in Egypt. Of the four, only two are well preserved. A boatman looked a mere speck sitting in the hollow of the ear of one of these monsters, which is supposed to represent Ramesis himself. The whole statue, including the throne on which it is seated, is one mass of solid stone, having been formed, like the temple, by cutting away the rock *in situ*.

The deities represented inside the temples appear to be "Re"—a strange figure of a man having a hawk's head with an orb and asp over it, and wearing a girdle, which hangs down behind as if to represent a tail. Another figure is that of "Hanooman." There is also a nearly nude female figure, with a beautifully mild expression, the head-dress

* He was the son of Osirei the First, according to hieroglyphic record. Se-Osirei, in ancient Egyptian, means "son of Osirei," which would be easily corrupted into "Sesostris."

formed by a vulture with extended wings, with a globe over it. This figure represents "Isis." Here also appear the gods "Anouke," "Sâte," and "Kneph," the triad of the cataracts; also a female figure, well formed and clothed, holding the hand of Ramesis, the king, probably intended to represent his queen. The entrance to this temple was found, and cleared of sand by Belzoni, who seems to have laboured with great success for many years in excavating tombs and temples in Egypt.

Besides the figures I have mentioned, there are inside of the larger temple eight standing Colossi. My head just touched their knees; yet they are only babes compared to the Colossi outside. In the adytum of the smaller temple is sculptured the sacred cow, the animal worshipped by the Hindoos at this day. The principal excavation, some 200 feet deep, is guarded by a Colossus, whose arm from the elbow-joint to the tips of the fingers measures fifteen feet. The hall, corridors, and side rooms are perfect, but all is dark; and the torches throw an uncertain light on the monstrous deities and various races of men in all the horrors of the fiercest battle-scene, giving a demoniac effect to the strange figures that seem to denounce the intruders within their sanctuary.

Having examined all the numerous apartments, from the small entrance, nearly filled to the roof with sand-drift, to the altar in the adytum at the far extremity, and our torches being nearly expended, we groped our way out of this most extraordinary cavern, and, after a frugal lunch off dates and Nile water, with a chibouk of aromatic jebelee, climbed up to the top of the hill, into the heart of which the temples have been excavated. From this spot we had a fine view of the surrounding valley and desert. We remarked here the site of a very large and apparently ancient enclosure of camp—probably that of Petronius and his Roman cohorts, who are supposed to have penetrated thus far; or it may once have been the walls of some large city now desolate and lonely enough, for not a living animal was visible: here solitude reigned alone.

We reached our boat late, and at once cast off from the shore and floated down with the stream all night. On arriving at Derr, we visited an old temple much mutilated, which also dates from the time of Sesostris. It contains the remains of some spirited sculptures. In the area a battle-scene is represented with imperfect traces of numerous chariots and horses, and confused figures; the king, out of all proportion, larger than the rest. In the

inner hall, I remarked a very unusual sculpture of a man and woman with their hands on each other's shoulders, as if wrestling. Dates are recorded in these temples in hieroglyphics, showing that Sesostris, the founder, lived or reigned 1355 B.C. It is *very* wonderful how these temples have remained in their present state so many years; the climate is so dry, little or no rain, and no frost to crumble stone away, that time passes over these ancient monuments with a gentle hand.

We sailed on and arrived at Dakke, the place mentioned along with Akhmin in Scripture, whither Pharaoh sent for the magicians, whose power, though indeed wonderful and long since lost to mortals, served only as a foil to the mightier works of the Divine missionary. Egypt has been for ages and ages the stronghold of magic, and it is still studied in the land. We learn in Holy Writ that the early race of man was originally endowed with miraculous powers, which seem to have been entirely lost. The early knowledge lingered for centuries among the Chaldeans. The remote grandsons of Adam were, perhaps, skilled in those wondrous sciences, of which the world has only now commenced to regain the knowledge—such as the various applications of electricity, mesmerism, clairvoyance, and

the like. Architecture wrought her wonders some three thousand years ago at Memphis, Aboo Symbal, and stupendous Thebes; and in those days we know that what was then termed magic was practised by the men of Dakke and Akhmin. In some of the mysteries of Isis, great secrets are darkly shadowed forth; and some of the sculptured remains on the walls of her ancient temples go far to prove how little there is really new in the wonders of the present age. We know that Moses was skilled in all the knowledge of the Egyptians. What was this knowledge, known only to the wily priesthood, to which body every Pharaoh belonged, and into which Moses, as the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter, was, doubtless, initiated?

We visited Gerf Hoosain the following morning, where there is a temple close to the river, as indeed all the temples are, proving that the river can in no place have greatly changed its bed. This shrine is also excavated in the rock, with a portico built at the mouth of the entrance. Most of the temples above the Island of Philoe, at the top of the first cataract, are excavated, though none below it. At the upper end of this temple, in the adytum or sanctuary, there are some sitting figures in peculiarly high relief, but not

in the best style. I could not find out who they were intended to represent; but the deity of the town was apparently "Pthah," the "Creator and Lord of Truth." The emblem of truth is, strangely enough, an ostrich feather.

On the evening of this day we arrived at the Island of Philoe, on the confines of Nubia or the country of the Barbêra, the inhabitants of which differ considerably from those of Egypt. The same remark applies to the general character of the country, which is very hilly, with little land. The hills are a stony desert, without a particle of vegetation, the usual formation being either sandstone or granite. The latter is found only close to the river, and has evidently been quarried to a great extent in former ages. In some places the hills are close up to the river, and nowhere do they leave more than a narrow strip of soil along the bank, on which the people can alone depend for a scanty supply of corn and pulse, the principal food of the fellahs or agriculturists. The date, palm, and "Sunt" thorn are almost the only trees. The thorn is very much like the "babool" of India (or rather Asia). The flower it produces is a small yellow ball, which has a very sweet scent. The dates of Nubia are very large and particularly

good, especially a kind termed "Ibrahimee." It is a fruit that may be used as bread, and has a fine sweet flavour when fresh from the tree.

All the land in Nubia, after the fall of the Nile, is irrigated by water-wheels. Over the wheel (*Sakya*), which is worked by oxen, is a double rope on which earthenware pots are fixed at intervals of two or four feet, and reaching down to the water of the river. This large wheel is moved round by a cog-wheel, and, as each pot is raised to the top, it empties itself into a wooden trough, and thus keeps up a constant stream of water. I have seen these same machines in Bundlecund and different parts of India, where they are known as "Egyptian wheels." But the most common instruments used in Egypt to irrigate the land is a long pole, weighted by a stone, acting as a lever to raise the bucket fastened at the opposite end; it is termed "Shadoof," and is used in China and Burmah.

The Berberee, as the Egyptians term the people above the first cataract, appear to be very poor; their clothing is usually wretched, and their food worse. A man of the working-class in Burmah, or even in India, is quite a gentleman in comparison. They do not shave their heads, as the Egyptians do, and as is usual with all Mahomedans. The women

wear their hair in knotted tufts, soaked in castor oil and clogged with dirt. No fancy, however wild, could paint anything more disgusting. In other respects, the usual expression of their faces is better than that of the Egyptian fellah, or peasant. I made frequent inquiries, in different places along the banks of the Nile, regarding the rent or taxes paid by the agriculturists. It varied much, but was always very high; in no case, apparently, under one-half the produce of the land.

It was a lovely moonlight,—such, in brightness and clearness, as is never seen in our dull atmosphere, if, indeed, in any other part of the world. At midnight, when all were asleep on board our boat, I wandered forth alone among the magnificent ruins on the island of Philoe, in search of some adventure. If spirits could visit the scenes of their departed grandeur, a fit spot, I thought, this would be; and as I sat and watched the soft moonlight streaming through the fractured columns and crumbling roofs of these mighty temples of a nation now swept away, over whose origin, language, knowledge, and strange civilization, mixed with barbarous customs, a mystic veil is hung—all lost in the forgotten *past*—the imagination could well picture the gorgeous processions of priests, with sacred boat or

ark: kings leading kings of many nations captive: armies and many people carrying emblems of the arts of war and peace: men leading lions, and camelopards, and other wild beasts of Africa;—chariots and horses and gay flags, by thousands, descend from the massive walls where they are all so clearly sculptured, and wend their way, as did the living originals thousands of years ago, through the *temenos*, or sacred enclosure, where the lofty palm-tree lends its shade, through the protracted *dromos* of sphinxes, under the towering propylons and majestic portico, up to the screen of the *adytum*, or sanctuary, within which the high priest alone might enter, there to deposit on the altar the rich offerings of a mighty nation to these strange hawk-headed deities. I never can forget the saunter through this still, calm night, and would recommend all who would see fair Philoe to the best advantage, to go and visit it alone in the bright moonlight.

The principal building in Philoe is the temple of Isis, who was the wife of Osiris, and mother by him of Horus. Sculptures relating to his birth, as well as the death and resurrection of Osiris (a Pharoah), are carved on the walls of the adytum. The triad were worshipped here. Isis is represented as a

young and beautiful woman in a light transparent dress. The sculpture is well managed, and displays much elegance in the figure, which is three or four times as large as nature. In her hand, Isis holds the emblem of life, well known as the Crux Ansata; she appears to be nearly identical with Ceres, the Greek goddess of corn or harvest. The temple is in very good preservation, and is remarkable for lightness and elegance. A large proportion of the figures on the inner walls still retain the remains of the bright colouring the Egyptians gave them. The emblem of life is in the form of a cross with a handle; the cross, therefore, was used as a symbol thousands of years before the dawn of Christianity.

There are two small dark rooms in the thickness of the wall of the adytum of this temple, approached by a narrow staircase, the opening to which appears to have been concealed by the altar. These were probably used for some dark purpose of superstition, or perhaps for the punishment of those who offended the majesty of the priesthood; so powerful were they that, according to Herodotus, they ruled the kings, and, when it pleased them, they ordered the king *to die*, and *he did die*,—until one king, named Ergamenes, when ordered to die, and well knowing that they had ample power to carry their order into

execution, being more bold and kingly-minded than his ancestors, defied their power, marched an army against them, and, having slain many of the priests, abolished this ancient custom. There are also here some magnificent pillared halls and corridors, each pillar or column having a different capital. In some the carving is very plain, in others profusely rich,—all together having a very fine effect; the most beautiful, perhaps, are those resembling a bunch of ostrich feathers, a bundle of lotus flowers with the stems for the lower part of the pillar, and the palm-tree, which, by the way, probably first gave the idea of pillars. Amongst the defects I was forcibly struck with what I am not aware has been before remarked, viz., that some of the finest buildings were built crooked; walls and passages that ought to be parallel, are not so; doors are not in the centre of rooms, and even the halls are not perfectly square. This is a blemish I have found in many of the finest buildings in Egypt.

There is a small temple on this island, now called "Pharaoh's bed," which, for extreme beauty, is worthy of notice. After having spent days in wandering among the temples of Philoe, one leaves it with regret. I could interest myself for many days exploring its vast and numerous ruins, with portals

and halls so lofty that wondrous tales are told of genii walking under them with unbended brow. Philoe is perhaps calculated to make a greater impression than any spot in Egypt; its temple of Isis, standing on a granite rock, with its supporting edifices occupying the entire island; while the surrounding hills, composed of gigantic rocks of granite burnt jetty black, are piled up in wildest confusion, without one atom of vegetation to relieve the eye. They seem tottering from their giddy height, or waiting in momentary expectation of another desperate effort, another convulsion of nature such as raised and left them as they are. The whole forms an unearthly scene, perfectly unique.

After visiting some of the numerous islands in this part of the river, Sehayl and Biggeh, on both of which are remains of small temples dedicated to "Sâte" (or Juno) and "Anouke" (or Vesta), we returned to our boat, and all the necessary arrangements having been made, we prepared to shoot the cataract. This is a most exciting scene; the deck is crowded by the captain of the cataract and his men, with whom a bargain has to be made to pilot the boat through; stalwart fellows they are, with their knives strapped to their left arms, pulling, roaring, and gesticulating like madmen, as the boat

dashes along under and between enormous boulders of jet black granite, to touch which would be certain and instantaneous destruction. The water boils and hisses around us; the white foam leaps high into the air, and brightly glitters in the rays of the sun; the strong current drives us along through half a mile of precipice, rock, and spray, till we suddenly glide forth into the calm, smooth water. Close before us is the green island of Elephantiné, while the dull roar of many waters is still heard behind that beauteous rainbow formed by the morning sun shining on the light mist that overhangs the Rapids; and many a dark-eyed maid, slight and graceful of figure, swims off to us with the too frequent cry of "Yâ Hawâgeh-buxshees-buxshees." It is wonderful to see how these merry creatures, both boys and girls, swim through the rapids from island to island, one with a flower, another with a date, or some other little offering to entitle the donor to a present. The air is warm, and so is the water. Clothes are, therefore, thought quite unnecessary, and their modest look and quiet demeanour soon accustom the eye to the quaint little leathern apron cut in thin strips, and decorated with beads of many colours, which serves as a head-dress in the water, and is fastened round the waist when the little maiden has landed,

and shaken off the few sparkling drops that hang to her black glossy skin.

Wandering over the island of Elephantiné, we examined the remains of a granite gateway built by Alexander the Great, which has apparently been the entrance to some edifice now entirely demolished. There is also the site of a temple, and another building supposed to have been the Nilometer described by Strabo; from him we learn that the temple was built by Amenoph III., in honour of Kneph or Chnubis, the Egyptian god that presided over the inundation of the Nile, and was particularly adored in the vicinity of the Cataracts. According to Wilkinson's chronological table of the kings of Egypt, Amenoph III. ascended the throne B.C. 1430, or 101 years after the flight of Moses. The finest ruins on this island were pulled down by a wretched creature, one Mahomed Bey, to build a miserable-looking house, which he was pleased to term a palace, at Aswan. It is now unroofed, and was probably never finished.

At Aswan there are no ruins beyond the Sekos of a small temple, with the oval of "Nero" engraved on it. It is supposed by some travellers that Strabo's well was here, in which the rays of the vertical sun descended during the summer solstice. Aswan is

the ancient Syene, to which it is recorded Juvenal was banished. How a *résumé* of these circumstances leads the mind wandering back to very distant epochs! Here I was much interested by the granite quarries, which are of vast extent, though in many places filled up by the drifting sand from the desert. Massive obelisks and gigantic statues, whole temples and cities, even from the most distant ages, have been hewn out of these rocks. The grain of the stone is very beautiful, the red particles in the granite are dark-coloured, and brilliant when polished. The composition appears to be of felspar, quartz, and mica. There is also much of another kind of granite (at least so in appearance) which has been termed "Syenite" (I fancy from the ancient name of the place); it contains no mica, but hornblende instead. I brought away some specimens, which I broke off, and which contain some minute metallic particles that glitter like gold.

Leaving Aswan, we floated down river the whole night, and arrived at the temple of Kom Ombos. Here I remarked that the granite formation met with throughout Nubia is succeeded by sandstone, which has been quarried much by the ancient Egyptians. It is of close grain, white, and of fine quality generally, and appears to have withstood

time and the action of the atmosphere better in buildings than granite, which, though harder, appears to disintegrate and crumble more easily, particularly where damp has reached it. The temple here is in ruins; but it must have been a very extensive one; the arrangement of the halls and rooms is unusual, there being two sanctuaries; probably it was dedicated equally to two gods. Here in a marsh behind the temple we found some good wild-duck shooting.

We returned on board the boat about eleven o'clock, and in a few hours reached Gebel Silsiles, the mountain of the chain. The river here is unusually narrow, and the natives have a tradition that one of the ancient kings of the upper country fastened a chain across the river at this spot. We landed and found very extensive quarries, and several curious grottos, consisting of long corridors, supported by pillars, cut in the face of the rock, with many sculptures and hieroglyphics depicting battle-scenes and triumphal offerings to Amun Re, the chief or supreme god. From Amun the Greeks probably took their Jupiter. Amun Re was the sun, one of the god's attributes.

We arrived early in the morning at Edfee, and visited the large and very beautiful temple there,

which is of comparatively late date, and one of the most perfect existing. The principal propylon is among the largest in Egypt. The height of the doorway really carries the sublime to the verge of the ridiculous, were it not that the vast and imposing propylon or tower over the gateway is in perfect keeping with the whole edifice. The strength of these towers must have been very great in ancient days when bows and arrows were in use; they probably served as a citadel for the protection of the town, and would also protect or defeat any attempt of the reformers of those days to dispute the authority of their priestly rulers.

The sculptures on the walls of the temple are gigantic, and are cut six or seven inches deep into the stone, a depth which admits of considerable relief and rounding of the limbs and features; some of the most beautiful are in perfect *alto relievo*, but they are of smaller size. The winged globe appears repeatedly, representing the god "Agathodæmon," who was, perhaps, identical with the god "Hor Hat," frequently represented here with his wife "Athor," the Egyptian "Aphrodite," depicted as a young mother, looking down with a sweet smile on their son "Horus," or, in short, the Mars, Venus, and Cupid of the Greeks. It seems very

probable that the Greek mythology was all borrowed from the Egyptians. These ancient sculptors deserve much credit for the expression they gave their colossal figures; their perspective is very bad, but the whole scene *always* so clearly and distinctly depicts what was so evidently intended, as to suggest the idea, however incredible, that what are really errors in perspective were thus drawn on purpose, and not from ignorance. This fine temple is much disfigured by numerous Arab huts stuck all round and about, and even over it, like swallows' nests. Nothing makes one feel the difference between the ancient and modern state of Egypt more than the comparison of these wretched mud huts with edifices of such magnitude and beauty.

One cannot wonder that astronomy was first studied in this land. I have been long used to the clear atmosphere of Asia, and have often watched the bright moonbeams reflected on the deep calm bosom of the Ganges; but never have I seen her shine forth so brightly; never stars possessed such wonderful brilliancy as in Egypt; the distinctness of the Milky Way, the flood of light reflected from Venus on the broad stream once seen can never be forgotten.

The fertility of the soil on the banks of the Nile

is very striking; it is entirely an alluvial deposit from the river, and is so rich as actually *to look* greasy. The crops sprout up very quickly on it, having a peculiarly bright green appearance, and are most tender to the touch; from the rapidity of its growth, the texture of the plant has not time to harden. Two crops of corn, sometimes three, are taken from the same soil annually; indeed, of pulse and vegetables it yields four crops.

CHAPTER IV.

THEBES.

The stupendous Remains of Thebes—Antiquity of the City; its Military Power—Temple of Karnak; immense Extent of its Ruins; its ancient Date—Obelisk of Luxor—Temple of Amun—The Memnonium—Overthrown Statue—Enormous Weight—Sculptured Battle-scenes—Egyptian Tools—A lost Art—Cleopatra's Temple—Curious Sculptures—Visit to the Vocal Memnon—Medeenet Haboo—Preservation of the Pagan Sculptures—Massive Doorway—Sculptured Walls and Columns—The King's Chambers—The Ladies of the Court—The Game of Chess—Prisoners offered to Amun Re—Naval Battles—Theban Tombs—Modes of embalming the Dead—Mummied Animals—The Ibis and Crocodile—Mummy Cloth—Tombs of the Queens—Tombs of the Kings—Tombs discovered by Belzoni—Passages and Chambers explored—The Harper's Tomb—Representations of Domestic Scenes—Boats, Weapons, and Works of Art—Visit to the Tombs of the Priests.

CONTINUING our course down the river, we reached Thebes, the "city of a hundred gates," on the 25th of December. It was an odd place for an Englishman on Christmas-day, surrounded by lonely ruins, o'er-turned Colossi, under crumbling propylæa, distorted heaps of massive stones that have caused some visitors to question which was the most wonderful effort of man, the piling them up into lofty edifices,

or such complete destruction, without the aid of gunpowder, as some have suffered.

Tottering columns and shattered obelisks lie strewn around me as I sit on the fallen capital of what was once a lofty pillar, and survey the remains of this city once so powerful that, according to the authority of ancient writers, it could furnish 20,000 armed chariots. The period of its foundation is unknown, but according to Josephus it was the capital of Egypt before the days of King Menes, who, according to the same authority, was the first king of Lower Egypt and ascended the throne 2320 B. C.; or upwards of 1300 years before the days of Solomon. The ruins and tombs extend *over many miles* on both banks of the river. On the 27th December we started early in the morning, taking our breakfast and lunch with us, and spent the whole day amongst the ruins of the temple of Karnak, — ruins so extensive that although I have now spent two whole days examining them, it is difficult to give an idea either of their present state, or of what the temple must once have been.

The approach is through a long *dromos* of sphinxes, a row of them being on either hand. These figures are much mutilated, and in many instances only the pedestals remain. The visitor then passes through

the very lofty *pronaos*, or portico, flanked on either side by two massive propylons or pyramidal towers, covered with gigantic sculptures, and enters the sacred enclosure or *temenos*, once probably a garden, planted with trees; and still showing the remains of a thick, crude brick wall round it. Still proceeding between sphinxes, through another portico flanked like the first with towers, we enter a large hall with ante-rooms on either side. Corridors are pillared off on both sides of the hall. Another gateway, very lofty, is then passed, and the visitor is all but lost amongst columns, pillars, obelisks, and statues, all more or less mutilated, with the fractured edges as fresh as if broken yesterday. At length a small isolated building is approached. It is composed of enormous blocks of polished red granite, having strange devices carved on the walls, and a massive doorway of black granite. Here sit the remains of three marble gods; for this is the adytum, or *sanctum sanctorum*, where the high priests of the temple alone might enter.

There appears to have been six entrances to the temple, like the one I have described. It would be an endless task to attempt a delineation of the whole building, which is a mile and a half in circuit, and surrounded by an outer wall 25 feet thick; yet a

few particulars may be given, which will afford some idea of its magnitude. The principal hall is 329 feet long, by 170 feet broad, having 12 massive columns down the centre, each 66 feet high, without reckoning the pedestal and capital, and 36 feet in circumference. Besides these, there are 122 pillars in 7 lines or rows on either side of the former; these are 27 feet in circumference. All the walls and pillars are covered with sculptured symbolical figures in *basso-relievo* and *intaglio*, representing battles, processions, triumphs, feasts, offerings, and sacrifices to gods of so strange an appearance that the wildest dreamer of the present day could not have imagined them; some are unearthly and horrible, others of a character that cannot even be whispered to ears polite. In short, the temple of Karnak is unquestionably the most splendid ruin in Egypt, perhaps in the world, and it is the most ancient; probably it was built by a number of successive monarchs, each trying to surpass his predecessor by increasing the dimensions and proportions of the buildings he added. A great portion of the edifice, forming in itself a perfect temple, with adytum, &c., although *not* the oldest part of the whole ruin, was built, as recorded in hieroglyphics, by Osirtasen the First, who was reigning

when Joseph (the patriarch of Scripture) arrived in Egypt.

I made sketches of several parts of the temples and of the obelisk of Luxor, with the adjoining propylon of a temple, once connected with the temple of Karnak by a dromos of sphinxes, a distance of about two miles; portions of them still remain, but the deposit from the river has in most places covered up their remains. This obelisk of red granite is one immense, beautifully polished stone. Its exact counterpart was removed by the French, and is now in the Place de la Concorde at Paris. Its removal cost a very large sum of money, and was only accomplished after repeated failures, and by a Scotch engineer. It will ever remain the wonder and astonishment of moderns how the ancient Egyptians managed to bring these two obelisks from the distant granite quarries, and set them up here without the machinery and many mechanical applications of the present day. They were erected in honour of Sesostris, and bear his name within the usual oval or "cartouche," 1355 years before the Christian era. A Frenchman, I may add, is busy excavating one of the temples here, and he has just opened one in which the sculptured wall has been plastered over, and on it the Twelve Apostles are painted in good

style, showing that at some early period it had been used as a Christian church; the Frenchman supposed the paintings to be Roman.

The next temple at Thebes deserving notice is Gooneh, dedicated to Amun, the Theban Jupiter, by Pharaoh Osiris, the father of Sesostris. By the way, this title is not written Pharaoh in hieroglyphics: the proper word is Phrah. It is remarkable that this is identical with the Burmese word for God or Budh, and is always used for or coupled with King. We next come to the palace temple of Sesostris, termed the Memnonium or Remeseum. It was seen and described by Strabo, who gives it the former name. This has been a very large building; and, with the exception of that portion which has been built as a palace or residence, is much on the same plan as Karnak. Here is the stupendous statue of the king, thrown down on its face; it having been seated on a throne in the usual attitude of Egyptian figures, with the hands resting on the knees. The shivered throne shows what force must have been used by the invaders who levelled this colossal monument with the dust; this solid mass of stone having been estimated by calculation to have exceeded in weight, when entire, 887 tons—a load for an East Indiaman. One may form some idea from this

of its gigantic size, and wonder how the Egyptians could transport from Aswan and erect such a mass. Its overthrow, together with the destruction of many other monuments, is generally ascribed to the epoch of the Persian invasion.

The sculptured battle-scenes on the walls of this temple, although they have suffered much from the hands of the destroyers, are very curious. In one place a town is attacked by an enemy who look, from their dress, like Asiatics. In another, there is a camp with corps of infantry and chariots. Here may be seen plunder-laden oxen and asses and horses that appear to be tottering under the weight of the booty; there a soldier beards a captive, while others are being beaten. The king appears in his chariot ten times as large as his men; in one place he is discharging arrows at the enemy; in another he receives the homage of the conquered people after the victory. Further on, the enemy are represented as having crossed a river, and are under the walls of their fortified city, with towers and a double fosse round it; they have chariots, and large bodies of infantry posted on the opposite bank, apparently covering the retreat of the main body, who are evidently being routed by the Egyptians, for many are giving way, and trying to recross the river. The stream,

however, is carrying them down; and one made much larger than the rest, probably their king, has been drowned, and his people are holding him up by the heels to pour the water out of his body. All these sculptures have much vivacity, and must be regarded as something wonderful, considering that they were executed some 3200 years ago, and without iron tools—at least as far as can be known, for no iron instrument of any sort has been discovered in Egypt. The instrument they used, to judge from many that have been found, was made of copper, but hard and pliant as steel. The method of making it so has been lost to us, and not all the machinery and boasted knowledge of Birmingham or Sheffield can make one atom of it.

I must not omit to notice a beautiful ruined temple at a short distance above Thebes, called Hermont, or Hermonthis, and built by Cleopatra in honour of her having given birth to Cæsarion, her son by Julius Cæsar. On the walls of the sanctuary there are some very curious sculptures, representing the accouchment in various forms; the child is being suckled by a cow-headed god, and is receiving the emblem of life and of truth, and various presents, from other strange deities. This famous queen having herself represented at such a time with her attendant nurses

and handmaidens, must be considered an odd fancy, when we remember the nature of her connection with the Roman conqueror.

We frequently visited the vocal Memnon, once the wonder of the ancients. It is recorded that when the rising sun touched its lips it gave forth a sound. So we rose early one morning, determined to test the tradition, and mounting our horses, galloped across the open plain, and reached the statue a few minutes before the sun rose. With a strange feeling of interest, we awaited under this colossus the gradual appearance of the glorious orb in the clear morning atmosphere on the same spot where during ages thousands have watched before; and a multitude of inscriptions in Greek and Latin testify to its miraculous powers, and to the credulity of numerous visitors, including emperors and mighty conquerors. We listened attentively, as the first sunbeam lit up the mutilated face of the monster, but he was provokingly silent. Even the cool breeze that usually accompanies the rising sun failed to cause any audible sound. There are two colossi sitting on thrones, the easternmost being *the* Memnon. They are sixty feet high, and are seen from a great distance across the plain. They have been carved out of a solid mass of stone; but the upper portion of the Memnon has

been broken down, and afterwards repaired with blocks of a different stone. Strabo says he was told when he saw it, that the injury had been done by an earthquake; but it is considered now much more probable that it was done by Cambyses and the Persian invaders. The ancient Greeks and Romans gave the name of Memnon to this statue. But now that the Egyptian hieroglyphics are read, it appears that the Pharaoh Amunoph erected the statues to perpetuate his own name, doubtless—and one of his titles was Mi-amun, or "the Friend of Amun" (one of the gods), from which probably the ancient historians gave it the name of Memnon.

We spent a day at another of Thebes' great temples, Medeenet Haboo, the temple palace of Rameses the Third, who reigned 1235 B.C. The ruins are very extensive, and the sculptures are most interesting; many of them have been beautifully preserved by some early Christians, who, after the fall of the ancient Egyptians used a portion of this temple as a place of worship; and, with a view of hiding the pagan sculptures, plastered them over with mud, and thereby unintentionally saved them from injury.

On entering this temple, the visitor passes through a fine granite doorway, which has evidently been forced open with great violence, the massive granite

door-post being shattered. Passing through an open court, a well-proportioned colonnade appears, its pillars beautified with the most elaborate carving. To this succeeds another magnificent hall, which again is succeeded by numerous apartments, and the peristyle of the temple. The sculptures on the columns and walls prove this edifice to have been the residence of the King or Pharaoh of the time. Some of them in the private apartments are *very singular, à la* Pompeii. Here, inspired by that strange fancy, the deity of generation, the king is represented in his harem; there are couches, chairs, and tables, and on one of the latter a *chess-board,* with the men in position; this best of games, therefore, was played upwards of 3,000 years ago. The ladies of the court, in light transparent dress, offer the king flowers and the bowl; at the same time, one fans him; and as he sits on a chair, he marks the favourite damsel by chucking her under the chin. To judge from her tender smile, she has no intention of resenting the liberty he takes in the mode most usual in these modern days. I may here remark that the game of chess is represented in more than one place in Egypt. Wilkinson calls it "draughts," probably because the men are not like those now in use, and are all nearly of the same

height; but the chess-men used in some parts of Asia at this day are exactly similar to these.

On the walls of the principal hall and court, the sculptures are so numerous, that they take days to examine. Here are more battle-scenes; some of the enemy have unmistakeably Jewish features; others would appear from their dress to be some European or Northern nation. Again, the king is represented returning in triumph, and his scribes are seen counting and recording in a book the hands of the slain enemy, large heaps of which are piled up before them. The king is represented smiting his captives with a sword before the hawk-headed god, "Amun Re." This I have frequently seen sculptured in the temples; and it would certainly lead one to suppose that the Egyptians did offer human sacrifices to their gods; but the most learned *savans* say they did not. On the outside wall of this building, there is such a profusion of sculptured scenes, that it would be impossible to describe one-half of them. One scene, particularly interesting, represents a sea or river fight, in which numerous large galleys, with two rudders, are shown on either side full of men, armed with swords and spears, bows and shields; slingers occupy the shrouds of the masts, and the prows of the boats

are spiked, apparently for transfixing and sinking the enemy's craft in the manner described in ancient history.

We spent several days among the ever-wonderful tombs of Thebes. These mummied millions, these spacious sepulchres hewn into the very centre of mountains, looking like a place of interment for a whole world, would alone testify, were other antiquities wanting, to the vastness of this once capital of the universe. So numerous and complex are these grottos and mummy-pits, that one scarcely knows where to commence description. The tombs are made in the desert hills surrounding the site of the ancient city, and are all excavated in the rock. kings and priests, and all others with sufficient wealth, appear to have excavated sepulchres for themselves and the members of their own family during life-time, while the poorer classes were piled hundreds upon hundreds together in narrow pits, with long passages leading in various directions; when full, the mouth of the pit was built up. Here, also, there is strong evidence of the people having been divided by caste as in India at the present day; the dead in different tombs showing peculiarities of dress and of preparation as mummies.

The father of history, Herodotus, gives an account

of the mode in which the Egyptians embalmed their dead, from which it appears to have been done by professional people, and not by the families of the deceased, as some have supposed. There were three different methods of embalmment for the three classes of people. By the first and costliest method, the brain was removed through the nostrils, and the intestines taken out through an incision made in the side; they were then washed in spirits and replaced in the body, with pounded aromatics, and the whole cavity filled up with pounded spices, including pure myrrh and cassia. The body was then left for seventy days, covered with nitre; then wrapped in bandages of cotton, dipped in gum; and, lastly, returned to the deceased's family for interment in the sepulchre, which was usually done with great pomp. The deceased had to undergo a trial before an appointed court before being consigned to the pit; and if it was proved that he had led a wicked life, the corpse was denied the rite of sepulture. For the second and third classes or castes a less expensive process served. A linament of cedar, or something with like properties, still more easily obtained, was simply injected into the body, which was then kept in nitre for seventy days, as in the former case.

All sorts of animals appear to have been frequently mummied: I met with dogs, cats, and birds. The ibis and crocodile seem to have been preserved with the greatest care, being regarded as sacred animals. The cloth on the mummies is also of various texture, some as good and beautifully fine as we can make it in the present day.

The first tombs we visited were those of the queens, which appear to have been greatly injured by fire. We observed, however, that they were spacious excavations, and the walls are covered with painted hieroglyphics. Far more curious than these are the tombs of the kings, excavated in the limestone hills, three or four miles from Thebes. One of the best of these was discovered by Belzoni, in A.D. 1815, and the paintings on the walls still retain the most vivid colouring. At the entrance two women are represented in the attitude of devotion, well executed; also two foxes, which are usually made to watch at the doors of the tombs. Passing these, we first descended by a steep staircase into perfect darkness; but we had provided ourselves with candles and torches, which threw a bright glare of light on the numerous painted figures around us. We then groped our way along a passage still deeper into the centre of the hill, the air be-

coming very offensive; and having passed another door and a staircase, which would have led to a still greater depth, we came to a chamber, at the end of a long passage, and from this chamber passed into a large hall having pillars decorated, as well as the walls, with highly-finished and well-preserved sculptures and paintings, looking, in fact, like the work of yesterday! Through this hall we again passed on to a second, where many of the sculptures are unfinished. It was interesting to mark where the draughtsmen had outlined the figures that the sculptors were to have completed. To this succeeded two passages, separated by a chamber, communicating by a door with the grand hall of the sepulchre, supported by pillars. Here, in a vaulted saloon at the upper end, we were informed that Belzoni found the beautiful alabaster sarcophagus, which he took to England, and which is supposed to be the cenotaph of the deceased monarch. From behind this saloon still another long passage descends into the heart of the mountain for about 200 feet, where the rock has fallen in; it is supposed to have been a private entrance, perhaps known only to the priests, that they might enter and take away the wealth deposited after the main entrance was sealed. I do not know the total depth of this

tomb from the mouth, but it must be something very great. On the pillars and walls the king is represented standing in the presence of various gods, who are receiving him after death; among them are genii and figures weeping: but the most interesting is a long procession with Kneph's boat, in which are introduced red, white, and black people. The red are evidently intended for Egyptians, as may be inferred from their dress. The white have light hair, blue eyes, and long bushy beards, with a short dress of probably some animal's skin, and are doubtless some northern nation. Others, also white, have long flowing robes, with pointed beards. The blacks are evidently Africans. Many of the sculptures seem to relate to the life and actions of the deceased, while others represent the ritual mysteries of Egypt, and will not bear too close a description.

The next tomb we visited is what has been called the "Harpers'," on account of the representation of men playing on that instrument. Its total length cut into the rock or hill, is said to be 405 feet. It dates at the time of Rameses the Third, B.C. 1235, and is most interesting from the fact that various subjects painted on the walls throw much light on the manners and customs of the ancient Egyptians. In the first room men are engaged slaughtering an

ox; joints of meat are being cooked, soup is being made in a pot hung with a tripod over a fire, men are employed making bread and pastry, and one carries it in a tray to the oven. In the second chamber there are various kinds of boats, with masts, sails, cabins, oars, and numerous crews, showing the considerable size of the boats. In another room men play harps and other instruments: here arms are introduced; helmets, spears, daggers, and coats of mail are amongst them. In another chamber there are chairs, couches, and sofas, of really elegant form and highly ornamented; some are covered with rich drapery, all showing much taste, and proving that these ancient Egyptians were, for the period in which they lived, wonderfully advanced in the arts of civilization, as well as the comforts of domestic life.

It would, indeed, be a lengthy task to describe all these tombs or grottos, containing agricultural scenes, the various productions of the country, deities, offerings and emblems; in fact, on all the walls, columns, ceilings, and architraves, there is no place unoccupied by figures or hieroglyphics. Some of the tombs, I may here remark, have been open for centuries. They were visited by the Greeks and Romans, whose inscriptions may be distinctly traced at the door-ways. It is not surprising, therefore, that

in these tombs of the kings nothing remains of the mummies except a few bones and scraps of cloth.

Having determined to visit the tombs still filled with uninjured mummies, we started early in the morning on horseback, accompanied by asses loaded with all the requirements of a substantial breakfast. The cook, with his red turboosh and flowing garments, the guides, torch-bearers, and pipe-bearers, made up a long and gay cavalcade as we wended our way from the ever-verdant banks of the Nile to the white limestone rocks of the distant desert, where few travellers reach, and where, therefore, the mummy pits are undisturbed. The first we entered belonged to the priests. After crawling along on our hands and knees, we shortly reached some spacious halls with a black, greasy, damp deposit on the walls; distorted limbs and shattered bodies lay strewed around; the foul air made our lights burn dimly; the stench—and, indeed, the whole scene—was so disgusting, that one of our party all but fainted, and we were obliged to help him out to the fresh air. These fat old greasy priests send out a worse effluvia than thousands of the working classes. We entered some others less close and foul, where paintings portray the various employments of the deceased when living; but having by this time arrived at the conclusion that an empty

stomach is hardly suited to such places, we proceeded to a sheltered spot, and found that a smoking omelet, cold pigeon pie, a cup of hot coffee, and the fragrant chibouk, had their due share of interest even here; and, after a short rest, we all declared we were up to anything. "Well," said our Arab guide, "but if any one faints in the place I will show you, he will never get out again,"—and looked mysterious. We had been urging him to show us a mummy pit that had not been rifled, which at last he agreed to do.

Accordingly, we set off still further over the hills, and soon reached a petty excavation in the sandstone rock, at the farther end of which there was a small hole, just large enough for a man's shoulders to be pushed through. Here we each lighted a candle, and, by the advice of the guide, took off our coats and waistcoats. The latter then worked himself feet foremost into the hole; and, though I looked down, he was not visible, but I could hear a faint rumbling noise, as if he was still proceeding in what he termed "jackal" fashion. I tightened my belt, felt my hunting knife was all right, looked to my candle, then backed into the hole feet foremost, and away down I slid at an angle of forty-five degrees, puffing a cigar for fear the candle should go out, and to rectify the not over salubrious

atmosphere. I was brought up at the bottom by the heels of my shooting boots going crash through the ribs of an ancient Egyptian, and, as a natural consequence, I was instantly enveloped in a fine pulverised dust, through which I could but dimly see the guide holding out his hand to assist me to rise, which I instantly grasped, but, yah! it crumbled to powder—it was the extended arm of a mummy leaning up against the wall. I now called out to my companions, who descended also. We were not a little horrified when we found ourselves walking on dead bodies, piled up so high, that one could not stand erect. Some, after a hurried look round, returned to the light of day, not, however, without considerable difficulty. I and another of our party followed the guide on our hands and knees through a passage, within which the mummies were piled up beneath and on both sides of us, till we reached a room of singular interest.

At least a hundred mummies lay around us, and they were apparently of the better class of people, for the cloth was fine, and the bodies very perfect—hard and dry. The Arabs had brutally divested some of them of their entire winding-sheet to sell to travellers for a few miserable piastres. On one side lay the strong muscular man, with shaven head and white

projecting teeth; in another place appeared a slight figure, whose long tangled hair streamed over the small face and bosom that but too clearly disclosed the sex. I here sat down on a coffin, and waited the return of the guide, who was conducting the last of our party out of the place, he having had enough of it; while for my own part, I was determined to prosecute the adventure to the end. At last, the guide returned, having left me longer than I expected, through taking a wrong turning, and losing his way for some time. We then set out afresh, and wended our way through long passages and low vaulted rooms for hundreds of yards, turning and winding along far underground through narrow low places, with mummies heaped up on either side, so low that I was unable to grope along without my chest, and even face, coming in contact with the decayed Egyptians. It was a scene I never can forget, crawling along on hundreds—nay, thousands—of decaying bodies, from which a fine dust arises and chokes the nostrils and lungs. A very faint light is given by the candles for want of air; and as one creeps along, bang goes the knee through a coffin like a bandbox, with a crash of bones, brittle flesh, and sinews. At length, I reached the end of these dismal passages, where there was a black-mouthed

well or perpendicular pit, from the bottom of which there could be no returning. I looked round for something to throw down to try the depth by sound; and, seeing nothing but the remains of the dead, I stuck my candle in a niche of the limestone wall, and raising a mummy, hurled it down the pit. There was a short pause; then "thud" it fell with a distant hollow sound at a great depth. With great exertion, we groped our way out, and returned to the light of day. No words can describe the pleasurable feeling of again breathing the pure fresh air.

After this, we visited three other tombs, with deep and sudden falls to climb down, and long winding passages with various arts and trades depicted on the walls. Here we beheld men in the act of building pyramids and carving colossi; there, others making baskets, brass lotahs, and earthenware pots, or various instruments of agriculture. In one a well-spread table is laid; some of the guests are seated, while the host receives one who has arrived at the door in his chariot. Dancing girls and players on various instruments are in attendance, performing just as they do now at Esneh or in India. Here the dancing girl, with hennah-stained nails and khole on her eyelashes, performs her pirouette,

while the old fiddler lends his approving nod and quaint leer. A girl is also represented in the act of handing a tray to the guests, all of whom are of a fair or reddish complexion, both male and female sitting on chairs and couches, showing what a wonderful degree of civilization these Egyptians had attained upwards of three thousand years ago, while other curious sculptures mark an admixture of barbaric indecency, though sometimes also proving a good perception of the ridiculous.

CHAPTER V.

THE PYRAMIDS.

Visit to Denderah—Temple of Athor—Portrait, Sculptures of Cleopatra—Chambers recently discovered—The White Monastery—The Copts, or Egyptian Christians—Tombs of Beni Hassain—Representation of Sports—Visit to Memphis—Temple of Phtha—Tombs of the Sacred Bulls—Adventure in the Desert—Mummies of the Ibis—State of the Fellah Population of Egypt—The Conscription—Kidnapping for the Army—A Sad Scene—Visit to the Sphinx; its Characteristics—The Great Pyramids of Geezah—Breakfast and Ascent—Age of the Pyramid of Cheops; its Area and Mass; its Interior—The smaller Pyramid named after Belzoni—Neighbouring Temples—Visit to Rhoda—Great plenty of Oranges—Visit to Heliopolis—Traditions connected with the Old Capital—Well of the Holy Family—Petrified Forest—Gardens of Shoobra—Mahomed Allee's Hareem—Abbas Pasha—Beautiful Kiosk—Brief Notice of Alexandria.

After spending ten most interesting days, we left Thebes, and arrived at Denderah, where there is a very fine ruin of a temple, in which we spent a day. This is the temple at which the sepoys are said to have worshipped, when the Indian army was brought into Egypt, and the frequent representation of the cow as a deity would fully account for the fact. On the ceiling of the *pronaos* there is also a very remarkable zodiac, and astronomical subjects, with two

very long and extraordinary nude female figures on either side.

This temple was dedicated to the goddess Athor, and is of much later date than many of the other monuments, having been built in the time of the Romans. On its back wall are figures three or four times as large as life, purporting to be portraits of the celebrated Cleopatra and her son Cæsarion. I cannot say that either the features or figures correspond with the renown of her beauty, though both are pleasing. Probably Egyptian architecture and sculpture were both on the decline when this temple was built, it being assigned to the age of the Ptolemies, while some of the sculptures were not finished till the reign of Tiberius. There are a number of long chambers built in the thickness of the walls, that have only lately been discovered, and to judge from the perfect and uninjured condition of the sculptures, were not known to the Persian invaders of Egypt.

We passed the "White Monastery," which is interesting on account of its being one of the early Christian settlements. Some of the monks swam off to our boats, in accordance with their long-established custom, and we gave them a few small presents. It is curious that these Copts or Egyptian Christians acknowledge Saint George for their patron saint.

Pococke supposes this monastery to have been erected in the time of the Empress Helena. The Copts are still a numerous and very interesting race in Egypt, and claim to be descendants of the early converts of Saint Mark.

We wandered for a day through the tombs or grottos of Beni Hassain, excavated in the rock on the side of a hill, and reckoned among the most ancient in Egypt. The paintings on the walls are of much the same description as in the tombs of the kings at Thebes, excepting that manly sports are here represented, hunting the wild animals of Africa, wrestling, &c., even women being engaged in feats of strength and agility. Some of the columns supporting the roofs of these grottos struck me as being very chaste and beautiful, resembling what is known as the Doric style.

The antiquities of Memphis and pyramids of Sakarah next engaged our attention; but only mounds of broken brick and pottery, and a few large fragments of stone, and dilapidated statues dug out of the earth, remain to mark the site of what was once the capital of Egypt, a city that, according to Diodorus, had a circuit of 150 stades, or upwards of 17 miles. Here stood the famous temple of Pthah, the Egyptian Vulcan, now covered by the sand from the desert

and alluvial deposit from the river. A very large and beautiful colossus, which must at some period have been thrown from its pedestal, is said to mark the probable site of the temple. A quiet, benignant repose is well expressed in the features of this statue, and round its neck is suspended a sort of small breast-plate, not unlike the Urim or Thummim, of the Jews; many other broken figures may be seen lying about, which were once covered with earth some ten or twelve feet deep, and have only of late been dug out.

It was in this city that Moses was brought up and educated in all the knowledge of the Egyptians by Pharaoh's daughter, and it was here where the famous bull "Apis" was kept. Some short distance off in the desert, beyond the pyramids of Sakarah, which are in a ruined state, the tombs of these sacred bulls have been discovered very lately, and are among the most interesting monuments of Egypt. They were found and excavated by a Frenchman, a M. Manyat, who is busy despoiling them of their most valuable antiquities. The excavation, I may remark, is of vast extent. I greatly admired twenty-four very large and beautifully polished black and red granite sarcophagi found here; they are by far the finest in Egypt, or, as I fancy, in the world.

We had wandered from this some distance into the desert, examining some ancient ruins supposed to be those of the "Serapeon," mentioned by Herodotus, when upwards of twenty Arabs surrounded us and demanded our money. They were armed with iron-bound clubs, and the sheik or head man had a gun, while we (one companion and myself) had our walking-sticks, and I had my belt on, with pistol and hunting-knife under my dress. Our servants advised and entreated us to give up our money as the only means of safety; and as we did not hearken to them, they soon made off, leaving us within the ring formed by the Arabs. We first tried reasoning with the rascals, saying we would have no objection to give them a present, as we had come into what they termed their territory, but that they in return must conduct us in safety back to our boat. They declined to do this, and would have stripped us of everything we had. The sheik brought matters to a crisis by pointing his gun at my companion, and repeating his demand for our money or our lives; on which my fellow-traveller very pluckily laid hold of the muzzle and tried to wrench the gun out of the Arab's hands. I had considerable difficulty in warding off two blows made with clubs at his head, one of which would probably have been fatal.

Finding the affair likely to be serious, I drew my pistol from my belt, but did not wish to take their lives if I could help it, for however justifiable in self-defence, it would have obliged us to flee the country. I called out to my companion to let go the gun, and allow me to manage the armed sheik, thinking that they would leave us alone when they saw our determination to resist; my friend complied, but the brigand by whom he was attacked instantly put the muzzle of his gun to my breast, saying, "Ana dâreûbâk" (I'll shoot you). I had but time to dash it aside with one hand, while with my pistol I struck him a heavy blow across the forehead, which brought him to the ground, as if shot, his face covered with blood. As my assailant's hands fell powerless at the same instant, I seized his gun, and using it as a club, we easily sent the rest flying across the desert, two of them carrying our mark along with them. I then smashed the stock of the gun over a stone, and threw it away, and we proceeded without further molestation. When all was quiet, we went on inspecting some curious mummy-pits of the Ibis, or sacred crane of the Egyptians, some perfect specimens of which we found preserved in earthen jars, and returned to our boats in the evening.

Such adventures are not common now in Egypt,

and only occur probably to those who go beyond the beaten track. The Arabs of the desert are a strange, wild race, wretchedly poor, and their lawless life is often a necessity. The bulk of the present inhabitants of Egypt, the fellahs, or agricultural class, are quiet and peaceable, but their condition very miserable; their lives seem to be spent in vain efforts to avoid a grinding taxation, and, if possible, to escape what is to them a still greater tyranny, the conscription, or more properly speaking, kidnapping, for the army of the Padsha, for whom or for whose welfare they can have no patriotic regard. The prophetic doom that they should be "trodden under foot and abased," a nation that should "ever be under the rule of foreigners," has most fully come to pass: Cleopatra was their last sovereign of Egyptian birth.

To preserve them from service in their ruler's army, parents will put out a son's right eye, and the young men themselves will not hesitate to cut off the first joint of their right fore-finger. The number met thus mutilated surprises every stranger. Egypt would be the easiest country in the world to conquer. The people possess no liberty to fight for; they have no patriotism, how should they! They cannot call their own bodies, far less the land they

till, their own. It is too often a weary fight with them to keep body and soul together. In Upper Egypt I witnessed two heartrending scenes of woe; a husband carried off by force from his weeping, helpless family; snatched up and dragged away by blood-thirsty, reckless Arnout soldiery, when working for a bare subsistence in his field, from which his hard task-master drew the profits; and a young man, still but a boy, torn from his mother's arms, who lay wailing on the river bank, and would not be comforted, long after the Arnouts' merkeb had floated away with her son for ever. These stolen conscripts never come back again, they told me. A large proportion soon pine and die in the barrack imprisonment they first suffer; and if they survive this ordeal, there is still no return; desertion is punished with death, and there is no discharge or pension even for the old.

Early in the morning of the following day, after about an hour and a half's ride from the river bank, opposite the great Pyramids, we arrived at the Sphinx. This most fantastic animal, which has been ever looked upon as one of the greatest wonders of Egypt, is quite close to the largest Pyramid, and is supposed to have represented "Royalty," the union of intellect and physical force; though some

ancient writers considered it the Father of Terror. Its most striking attribute is its immensity. There is still a degree of placid beauty about its features, an abstracted expression, such as may often be remarked on the very large Budhist idols; but time and ill-usage have made sad havoc with the monstrous face. After removing all romance from it, it is simply a large sandstone rock or cliff, that has stood isolated in the plain, carved down into the figure of a monstrous animal, with a female human face; the work must have been one of considerable time, and the conception, doubtless, a grand one, and well adapted to the purpose of inspiring terror into the weak minds of the worshippers. Here we saw a Frenchman working under the orders of the local government. He had forced an entrance into the Sphinx, not being able to find a doorway, which has been dug for in the surrounding sand by many *savans*. To impart an idea of the size of the Sphinx, I may remark that the circumference of its head has been found to measure 102 feet.

Having satisfied our curiosity with the view of this marvel of the world, we next proceeded to the great Pyramids of Geezah. Once seeing them is not sufficient to enable the eye to take in their vast

dimensions. We first walked round the largest, and, after indulging in the usual reveries and exchange of ideas on such occasions, proceeded in a more practical spirit to a good breakfast that our servants had brought with them; and, after the pleasant fumes of our chibouks had induced a fitting state of mind, we commenced slowly and at our ease to climb the vast pile. The difficulty is not so great from the steepness as from the great size of the stones composing each layer.

This vast mountain of hewn stone was supposed by Herodotus to have been built by a Pharaoh (or King) called Cheops. Sir G. Wilkinson and other *savans* read his name "Suphis," and allege that he ascended the throne of Egypt 2133 years B.C., or 3976 years ago, about twenty years after the foundation of the Assyrian empire by Nimrod, the mighty hunter. It does not appear, however, that they have any sufficient proof of either the time or person by whom those enormous wonders of the world were erected. Josephus, and the most ancient writers whose records we now have, evidently did not know, or they could not have failed to give a clear account of such a work. Picture to yourself, reader, 366,000 men constantly employed for twenty years in building the great Pyramid! The present

base has been found, by careful measurement, to occupy twelve acres of ground, and its perpendicular height to be 460 feet 9 inches, a good many feet off the top having been at some former period thrown down; in fact, the size of what is usually called a good high hill. The solid contents of this pyramid have been calculated at 85,000,000 cubic feet.

From the top of this pyramid the view of the surrounding country is very extensive. In its interior are chambers, entered through a long dark passage, which we traversed with lanterns. The sarcophagi found inside show that it was used as a tombstone, and render it highly probable that the great structure was built with the sole idea of perpetuating the name of the builder. So much knowledge of architecture and levelling, which has been accomplished with beautiful correctness, is a striking fact for that early period; and here, again, the question of what means were used to raise these enormous stones bewilders the mind. Inside, we found the pyramid very hot and close. I tried the effect of firing off a pistol; it made a most deafening noise, and was heard outside with a peculiar sound. The long passage leading into the interior has all the properties of a whispering gallery. There is not much to describe about these vaulted chambers, in

the heart of such an immense mass of stone; the only wonder is that they were not made larger, and more of them. It has been calculated that there might have been upwards of 3,000 rooms of the same size as the one within the great pyramid as it now stands. The walls of the chambers and passages are, for the most part, cased with granite beautifully polished. One can scarcely walk along the passage with shoes on, it is so smooth.

We also entered the second pyramid, usually termed Belzoni's, because he found out the opening into it. The details do not materially differ from the other, only everything is on a proportionately smaller scale. On one side there are the remains of some very large temples. Some of the stones piled one upon another are really *enormous*, and still beautifully polished; they have only lately been dug out of the sand, or rather the sand dug away from around them. Near this there are also tombs, which we examined, and, after a long day's amusement, returned to our jolly, comfortable boat, now soon to be changed for a residence on shore.

The following day we went on a second visit to the island of Rhoda, a pretty spot covered with gardens and country seats of the Caireens. Tradition has fixed on it as the place where Moses was found by

Thermuthis, the daughter of the then reigning Pharaoh, according to Josephus. We plucked and ate some fine oranges, growing here in the wildest luxuriance; no one said me nay, they were so plentiful. The next day we returned to Cairo, and left our boat for Shepherd's hotel, after a two months' very pleasant and most interesting tour on the Nile.

The first three weeks after our return, I resided in Grand Cairo, where the climate at this season of the year is very pleasant, and, generally speaking, the society agreeable, both at the hotel and in the town, while these old eastern bazaars have endless interest for one fond of watching human nature and its peculiar characteristics in different parts of the globe. Besides, we made some delightful excursions to various places of beauty and antiquity in the vicinity, one of the first, of course, being a visit to Heliopolis, at one period the capital of Egypt. A fine, but much-worn obelisk, and a few large carved stones, amidst hills of *débris*, now mark the spot where it once flourished, and is all that has withstood time and the invasion of Cambyses. Here stood the great temple of the Sun and the "On" of Scripture. Here grew the "balm of Gilead," which Josephus tells us was grown by Cleopatra,

who first introduced the plants from Judea; it was considered the most precious of all drugs, and was one of the principal gifts of the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon. Many wonderful occurrences have happened and been forgotten; much has been learnt and lost in this Heliopolis. Here arts and sciences and logic, probably now unknown, were studied 4000 years ago; here Moses and Plato, and afterwards Herodotus, lived for years under the tuition of these most learned Egyptian priests; and here, also, it is recorded, a heathen astronomer saw and marked the awful darkness that veiled our Lord's death on Mount Calvary.

I wandered about this deserted spot during a fine cool afternoon; the country looking green and rich, and the numerous fruit gardens most inviting. In one of them a very large and old sycamore-tree is pointed out as marking the spot where Joseph and the Virgin rested on their way into Egypt. Many Christian pilgrims believe in this, and make a point of visiting it, and drinking of the water of a well close by, said to be peculiarly sweet and good, ever since the Holy Family partook of it. I found it cool and refreshing, and did not feel at all in the humour to question the simple tradition. One day we rode to a place called the petrified forest; the

name "forest" would certainly mislead the uninitiated, for there is nothing but an open desert, strewed with masses of petrified wood, resembling pieces of palm and something like bamboo, though it is a grass not now known growing in Egypt. Such a quantity of wood, now turned into stone all over this part of the desert, proves one very interesting fact, namely, that what is now dry sand and sterile desert, once bore green trees and flowering shrubs.

A very pretty ride or walk to the gardens of Shoobra, through an avenue of large sycamore and acacia trees, deserves notice. Within the garden is a palace, built by Mahomed Ali, the late powerful and bloody ruler of Egypt; here is a portrait, said to be very much like him. The palace seems generally in bad taste, a mixture of the European and Asiatic; there is a large fountain, with broad open bath or pond, in which the numerous harem collected from the warm countries of the south and the fair beauties of Circassia were wont to bathe and romp, with toy boats and galleys, for the amusement of the grey-bearded chief, who was accustomed to recline on the dewân, with his long chibouk in hand, and watch the gay crew, till one merry maid, more fearless than the rest, would upset one of the tiny boats,

when the wild scramble, shrill shouts, dripping silks and streaming locks would make the old Pasha laugh till the tears ran down his cheeks, and his pipe-bowl split on the marble floor. The lately deceased ruler, Abas Pasha, did not usually reside here; but if all reports are true, his amusements were still less edifying than those on which I have glanced. In the centre of the garden there is a really handsome kiosk, with fountain, and marble and alabaster pavement; coloured lamps and glass in great profusion, a small aviary, and a few animals in the shape of a lion, a giraffe, and two or three gazels, complete the spectacle. One of the gardeners gave us, for *buxees* of course, some of the finest oranges I ever ate: he plucked as many off the trees as we could conveniently take away of the delicious, high-flavoured, blood orange of Malta, and the not less highly-scented manderin of China.

The Egyptians, both men and women, are generally very plain. Their dress is neither convenient nor picturesque, at least to the eye accustomed to oriental costumes. The people of Nubia have generally a better expression than the people of Lower Egypt, though their skin is darker; their eyes are larger and more expressive, their dress usually

white, and very simple. Boys are in their natural buff, and girls wear only an apron, made of leather in stripes, till they are twelve or thirteen years of age.

Alexandria, founded by the great conqueror of that name, has now little worthy of description; in everything there is a mixture of the oriental and the worst European taste. It is, however, a town of vast importance from its situation, and may yet, as Napoleon said, be the capital of the world. It is the stepping stone between Europe and India. The *débris* and ruins prove that it must have once been a very large city. Here stood the Pharos, one of the seven wonders of the world; here also was maintained the famous library of the Ptolemies, consisting of the wonderful number (for those early days, when the printing press was unknown,) of 700,000 volumes, a copy of every known work in the world, of which the Caliph Omar was the last and most barbarous destroyer; and here flourished the first museum, the seat of learning, whence so many philosophers issued to benefit mankind. Here the Sarepeon, with its colossal statue and its famed philosophy, the gymnasium, the panium, and the hippodrome, all

flourished; but all have passed away, and the only remains of ancient Alexandria are the two mutilated obelisks, erroneously termed Cleopatra's needles, and the equally mistaken Pompey's pillar. The shaft of the latter is certainly very elegant, and forms the best monument of the ancient capital of the world.

CHAPTER VI.

SMYRNA AND THE VILLAGES OF IONIA.

Departure from Alexandria—Coasting the Isles of Greece—The Sporades and Cyclades—Rhodes—Smyrna—Dinner at M. Mille's—Greek Beauty—The Country around Smyrna—Mount Pagus—Relic of the Seven Churches—Sailing in the Gulf—The Shore of a Tideless Sea—Silk Manufactory—Embroidery—The Bazaars—Visit to Nimfi—Mountain Scenery—Camels—Albanian Soldiers—Colossal Statue of Sesostris—Description of the same by Herodotus—Riding Home—A Village stroll at Sunrise—Genoese Ruins.

It was still the month of February, too early to travel in Palestine; and as my health required a short sea trip, instead of going direct to Jaffa, to which port there came Austrian steamers every fortnight, very moderate in charge and comfortable, I took a passage in a vessel bound for the Holy Land, but which went round by Smyrna, touching at all the islands and ports on the coast.

Accordingly, I sailed from Alexandria in the Austrian steamer *Stambul* over the deepest blue waters I have ever seen. So beautifully clear is the water of the Mediterranean, that one can see the whole of a vessel's keel and bottom as she lies at anchor.

I fail to find words to describe the pleasurable feeling I felt in gliding along between the lovely isles of Greece, through the Sporades, with high rocky mountains and bright green valleys, dotted with white villages; by the Cyclades on our left, that gave Delos to the Greeks: these well-named islands of the blest, whose vine-clad hills in days of yore echoed to the hero's harp and lover's lute. We first passed under the marble steps of Scarpanto, then by Rhodes, conspicuous in the most remote annals of history, whose inhabitants were distinguished for early civilization and love of liberty. Here first flourished the knowledge of navigation, and here in later days the Knights of Saint John of Jerusalem made their oft-recorded heroic defence against the advancing Moors; and sad pity it is that it should still belong to the Turks. Still on we glide by numerous islands, very beautiful, by Lero and Patmos, till bright Samos, far-famed for its glorious black-eyed virgins and sparkling wine, rises and again fades in the distance, and we are close by the shore of Scio, whose pretty town of like name shines brightly in the sun out of deep green foliage; and many vineyards, with its little port full of vessels, whose build and rig seem so light and fragile, that they look as if they would

be fairly blown away like a child's toy on the first strong breeze. This was the ancient paradise of the Levant; but as its beauty was great, so was its fate sad; for when overrun by the advancing Mahomedans, its inhabitants bravely resisted, till the whole island was desolated, the men massacred, and the women sold as slaves; it has now, however, recovered much of its former beauty. It gave birth to Ion, the tragic poet; and it also claimed the honour of being the birth-place of Homer. At length we enter the Gulf of Smyrna, with Byron's extolled "Mitylene" in view.

Where so much beautiful scenery is hourly passed, it would be tiresome to describe the whole; but this gulf, with its numerous little bays and islets, its clear, smooth water, its land-bound harbour, with high mountains tipped with snow in the distance, can never be lost to the mind. It was a bright, sunny evening, though chilly, as we steamed into the harbour; three Austrian frigates and one French brig of war, with numerous merchant vessels, adding considerably to the gaiety of the scene. We landed at once, and went to a very nice little hotel (M. Mille's), where we were soon joined by a pleasant American party, passengers in the same steamer with ourselves. After a walk through a part of this

very pretty town, we returned and did honour to M. Mille's dinner and fruity Levant wine. Here hares, partridges, and woodcocks abound; indeed, the bazaar here is full of luxuries of every sort. Smyrna supplies England and Europe with the best dried fruits; its grapes and figs are particularly good, while the rosy apples put one in mind of home.

The town is of considerable size, containing some 150,000 inhabitants of almost every nation; the Greek cast of feature, however, is predominant. In few places have I seen such beautiful women and handsome men. I have taken some distant rides, once to the village of Budjah, which is almost entirely Greek; and here, at the door of a nice little cottage, stood a Greek girl, who was beauty personified; such regular features, such expression (which is rare with perfect features), and such a delicate colour, one can seldom meet with. I pulled up my horse and dismounted, as the thought passed through my mind that I would give worlds to be able to speak a few words of Greek. I tried Italian and Arabic, but neither were understood. I took out a cigar, and looked at her bright eyes; the laughing puss guessed at once I wanted fire and brought it. My cicerone, one Elias, a Hebrew, came up, and through his dirty be-bearded mouth

I was enabled to exchange a few words with her, and induced her while we rested to bring me a cup of pure water from a neighbouring spring. We rode back over a hill, on which heath was growing and a kind of stunted holly; the cypress and poplar abound and many fruit-trees of European climate, as well as fig and olive trees; the latter seem to be most common, groves of them shading every valley. We reached M. Mille's hotel late in the evening; and after a capital dinner off Mediterranean soles, roast woodcocks and salad, Ionian wine, and a chibouk of fragrant latakia, I retired to rest, to dream of my fair Greek.

The second day we rode up to the top of Mount Pagus, where now are the only remains of ancient Smyrna, so frequently extolled, in bygone days, as the Crown of Ionia and the Queen of the Cities of Anatolia. On the top of the mount is a ruined castle, which occupies the site of the Acropolis. Portions of the old Hellenic wall are still visible, with a few remains of the Temple of Jupiter. An excavation in the hill still marks the site of the stadium; and here Polycarp is said to have suffered martyrdom. Within the ruins of the castle is an old mosque, which is said to have been the primitive church of Smyrna, one of the Seven Churches of

Asia Minor. From the Acropolis, there is a splendid view of this really beautiful town, of the calm bay and snow-tipped hills on the opposite shore, over wide plains to the east, traversed by the river Hermes, and to the south the Meles, the river of Homer, crossed by a strange old aqueduct, completes the classic scene. We returned to town over the Caravan Bridge, which spans the Meles, and took a long stroll through the bazaars, churches, and mosques.

We set out early the following morning in a quaint light skiff, with peaked bow and stern, for a sail in the gulf. Nothing can exceed the clear deep blue of this sea—so clear, that you can see the bright golden fish darting far below the surface. It was most refreshing to the senses to glide softly along, and mark the crystal wavelets washing the pebbly shore; for in this highly-favoured Mediterranean, there is no tide to sully its waters, or to leave a long sandy or muddy beach. Here the green grass and many-coloured wild-flowers grow to the very edge. The sun shone out very brightly, but yet the air was agreeably cool. Gliding along between numerous little islands, we landed where the shore looked most promising. Among other places, we walked through the picturesque village of Bournabat.

In the evening we rowed back to the town over the smooth waters, now purpled with the bright rays of a setting sun, while each beautiful island and towering hill was reflected on its river-like bosom.

A silk-spinning manufactory here is well worth a visit. Not less than 160 Greek girls are employed in winding and cleaning silk;—wild-looking gipsies the most of them are, but some very pretty, with their long elf-like hair streaming down their backs. We walked along the bank of the Meles to Caravan Bridge, the great place for the gay Smyrniotes to take the air; and returned through the bazaars, which make a good display. Gold and silver embroidery work is here beautifully executed, the prettiest Greek girls' caps I have ever seen,—they are famed all over southern Europe.

The following day we started early for Nimfi, upwards of thirty miles inland, in the direction of Casabar and Sardis, with the intention of visiting one of the most ancient monuments in the world, a sculpture of the Egyptian king and conqueror Sesostris, carved in the solid rock, marking his victory over the tribes who then held this part of the world. We saddled and rode off early,—took a mounted guide with us, a spare horse with pack-saddles for provisions, and with our guns "in rest," trotted out of the town.

We were fortunate in having a bright, clear, frosty morning; all the tops of the surrounding hills shining white with snow. The road first lay through fertile valleys, where the young corn had already sprouted some inches in height. Large groves of olive, fig, apple, and cherry-trees clothed the gently rising ground, while between the town and Mount Pagus the plantations of dark green cypress marked the old burial-grounds of bygone Smyrna.

Thus admiring and enjoying the landscape around us, we crossed the Meles and other clear streams; we passed numerous vineyards and hedgerows, and observed that all the low ground seemed to be well cultivated, though the villages were few and far between. As we neared the crest of a mountain, the scene turned wilder and the frozen wreaths of white snow lay upon the dark-coloured heath; here too I remarked the hardy sycamore and poplar trees and stunted oak, while higher up the mountain, two species of fir abounded. Looking upwards, the scene much resembled what I have seen in Scotland; but a glance towards the plain below changed the impression, for there passed along a string of camels, more than a hundred in number. These animals, I remarked, are much more handsome here than in India or Egypt; they are larger, and have

long shaggy hair on their heads, necks, and legs, very different from the smooth-haired camel of warmer climes.

After passing over the top of the hills we came to a guard-house, where there were some Albanian and Syrian soldiers; lawless devils they are, but we were well armed and commanded respect. I roundly refused to pay any *buxees*, or toll on their demand, and pushing into the room, sat down and warmed my feet at a blazing wood fire. They looked sulky at first, and one took hold of the barrel of my gun; but on a quiet remark in Arabic, that it was on full cock and might go off, he changed his demeanour, was delighted to hear his native Arabic spoken by a stranger, and we sat down and smoked a pipe together, and became capital friends. In half an hour we remounted and rode on again, and about 2 P. M. reached the village of Nimfi. Here we hired a tolerably comfortable room in a Greek house; had a cup of Ionian wine with apples and dried figs for lunch, and leaving our sumpter horse, started with two armed guides for the Colossus, which we reached in an hour and a half.

Our road lay through a wild and beautiful country which, unhappily, like many similar scenes in this part of the world, is infested by robbers. Many a

giaour has here been despoiled and stripped. Even the Belgian consul was carried off to a mountain fastness, and not released till 500*l.* ransom was paid for him; another wealthy merchant was mulcted in the sum of 2,000*l.*; while some years ago the Earl of Manchester's eldest son had his finger nearly cut off by some fellows who were not content with his watch and purse, but took a very tight-fitting ring also.

We reached a spot where rocks thickly clothed with trees, principally firs and underwood, rise on either side almost perpendicularly. Here we dismounted, and after a little climbing came in sight of a gigantic human figure sculptured in relief on the flat surface of the rock, as seen and described by Herodotus. This memorial is supposed to date from 1300 B.C.; and after being lost sight of for nearly 1000 years, its site was discovered about thirty years ago. It is clearly Egyptian in style; and doubtless, as Herodotus says, was intended to represent the conqueror Rameses the Second, called Sesostris by the Greeks, who overran the country as far as the Euphrates. Homer, I believe, records that Memnon, the friend of the god Amon, came with an Egyptian army to the assistance of Troy. Herodotus says that the colossus holds a spear in one hand and a bow in

the other, but it struck me that the latter instrument was the usual *flagellum* or whip, with which all the Pharaohs are represented on the monuments in Egypt.

After a close examination of this interesting relic of antiquity, and the robbers not appearing to dispute our way, we returned to Nimfi by a different route. Game here appeared plentiful. Riding along we put up a hare, four woodcocks, and some partridges; and shortly after dark we reached our lodging in the Greek's house, where a comely dame waited on us and spread a carpet before a bright blazing fire of pine wood. We got out our provisions and made a capital stew in a glazed pot, of a cold leg of mutton and potatoes, while for our beverage we had a cup of the fresh juice of the grape. After the soothing chibouk we rolled ourselves up in our blankets before the fire and slept soundly till morning.

Having risen with the lark, I strolled through the village, while eggs were being fried for breakfast; saw the pretty niece of my hostess milk the cow, and made acquaintance with half the young people of the hamlet—a sweet spot situated in the close gorge of the mountain, and surrounded by gardens. The people here are as fair as in England. I did not see one person in the village with dark hair or eyes;

light golden hair and blue eyes being the most common. After breakfast we rode back to Smyrna, visiting on our way an old Genoese castle and palace, now completely in ruins, but evidently places of great importance in their day. What a wonderful people these Genoese must have been in their time! They had their colonies all over this part of the world, from Constantinople spreading all along the coast of the Mediterranean.

CHAPTER VII.

RHODES AND CYPRUS.

Adieu to Ionia—Arrival at Rhodes—The famous Colossus—Ancient Fortifications—The Knights of Rhodes—Church of St. John—Towers of the Harbour—Original Inhabitants—The Greek Isles—Mythological Legends—The Isle of Patmos—Sea-port of Helena—An armed Peasantry—The Ancient Port of Laodicea—Late Outbreak—Hospitality of the Town—Arrival at Cyprus—The village of Lameco—Monastery—View of the Country—Venus in her Garden—Beyrout—Greek Merchants—Acre—Mount Carmel.

During my last visit to Smyrna, I received a most hospitable invitation from the principal physician there, to his house at the village of Bournabat,—and so long as memory holds her seat, will the most agreeable reminiscences be cherished of our moonlight walks in gardens where the rose, the orange, and the myrtle combine with the sweet honeysuckle and Asiatic flowering shrubs of richest odour to shade the trellised bower; where the more peaceful thoughts long love to linger, till one all but wishes his lot were cast in fair Bournabat. But time came when I must bid adieu to the pleasant scenes of Ionia, and I soon found myself at Rhodes. How well I remember,

as a child, looking at the picture of the enormous brazen colossus, with its legs stretched across the mouth of the harbour, and ships sailing between them, and now I was looking at the veritable port! The statue, alas! has long since disappeared. The last remnant of its fallen greatness was sold by the wretched Turkish government to a Jew, who broke it up, and loaded 900 camels with the metal, as the story goes. It was handed down to us moderns as one of the seven wonders of the world, and right well, if it ever did span the entrance to this harbour, it deserved the distinction. It is more probable that it was erected on the shore, or perhaps at the mouth of the little or inner harbour. It is certain the statue did exist, and its massive remains were extant even to a late date.

Rhodes is a very interesting town. As we wandered through the yet strong fortifications, a lasting monument of the power and the energy of the knights of old (the Knights of Saint John of Jerusalem, who made a most heroic defence of the place when attacked by the Turks under Suleiman II., surnamed "the magnificent"), fancy could well people the fine old fortress and venerable castle with these gallant knights of early Christendom in their strong armour, repulsing the repeated attacks of the tur-

baned hordes. Pleasing indeed I found it to wander through the highly-ornamented Gothic gateway, the moated towers of great size and strength, with all their paraphernalia of drawbridges, battlements, and bastions, made impregnable to the warriors of those days by a treble line of wall and ditch, and pleasant to mark the numerous armorial bearings of the knights sculptured on shields of marble and stone over the doors and on the walls of the grey old palaces and buildings. Here I could distinguish the arms of England and France, the Pope's keys, and the heraldic devices of some of the most illustrious families of Europe.

The ancient church of Saint John has been converted into a mosque, but is still in fair preservation, though its marble columns are whitewashed. Here we visited the hospital of the knights and the palace of the Grand Master, now in ruins. The entrance to the harbour is defended by two square towers, built by a Grand Master, and called respectively by the names of Saint John and Saint Michael. These with the rest of the fortifications, grey with age, and built in the old style, with overhanging buttresses, and with stone crosses in the wall, have a very imposing effect, and forcibly lead the mind back to the days of chivalry. Could Sir Walter Scott but

have seen this place, and heard its legendary tales related, what an interesting story he would have added to the long list of his productions.

According to the Greeks, this island was peopled by the Heliades, the grandchildren of Phœbus, and their king accompanied Agamemnon to the siege of Troy. It was very famous for its temples and architecture, and there were a hundred different colossi, besides the celebrated stupendous statue at the entrance of the harbour, which it is recorded was erected in honour of the sun and dedicated to Apollo.

For three days we sailed among the islands of the Grecian archipelago, and nothing we thought could exceed their beauty, or the clearness and delightful temperature of the atmosphere. Each lovely isle, too, has its classic legends or its sacred history. With what pleasure one views Samos of Ionia, celebrated in mythology as the birth-place of Juno; and Icaria, called after Icarus, the son of Dædalus, who, fleeing from the tyrant Minos, made wings of feathers, fastened with wax, for himself and son; but Icarus mounting too high, the sun melted the wax, the injured wings forgot their skill, and he was plunged into the sea near this island. What a pleasurable feeling it is to recall the impression these tales made

upon one when a boy, while the very spot they celebrate is in view! With a feeling akin to awe, one looks upon the Isle of Patmos; for it was the scene of the Apocalypse of Saint John. It was here that he wrote the book of his Revelations, during the exile to which he was condemned by the Emperor Domitian for preaching the Gospel. Then come in view Lero and Calamo,—known for their abundance of honey, and hundreds of little islands, famed long ago for corsairs, and, by all accounts, not quite free from them now. In the far distance, high Mount Taurus rears his snowy peak into the sunlit sky; and as we gradually near the mighty range, groves of fir and pine, and rocky glen, add each their peculiar beauties to the scene.

Early one morning we put into Phineka Bay, the weather being very boisterous for Austrian mariners; though their vessels are comfortable, they make but poor sailors; and their engines, engineers, charts, compasses, &c., are all English. We lay in the bay eighteen hours, and thus had abundance of leisure for local observation. The beach is very rocky, and the whole coast bold in the extreme. Many of the mountains in the background, very high and white with snow; some are put down in the chart as 4,800 feet high. On a rocky hill close to the

beach in the bay, there is an old castle, I should think of Saracen origin, which shelters a few poor huts. We tried to land in one of the ship's boats, but found the surf too high.

On the fourth morning we anchored off Mersina, and went on shore for a few hours; it is the sea-port of Helena, some three hours' journey inland. It is only a small village, however, inhabited principally by Turks, yet evidently increasing in importance, as four or five large store-houses of stone were being built. Four English vessels and two French were lying in the port; the principal export appeared to be wheat and fruit. Here the coast is low in comparison with what we found it all the way from Smyrna, nevertheless very pretty.

Early on the fifth day we arrived at Alexandretta, or Iskenderun, a place of some little importance as being the port of Aleppo, but in itself a wretched little village. I took my gun on shore with me, and wandered over the place. Many of the people could speak Arabic here; some little traffic was going on with two or three small vessels in the harbour, and a long string of camels were arriving from Aleppo. We took a guide, and rambled away into the country. A European (a Spaniard, I think) warned me not to go far, and not to the mountains, as they

were infested by robbers. All the country round the village is very low and wet, creating miasma, which causes the inhabitants to suffer much from fever and ague. The mountains in the vicinity were crowned with snow, and looked wild and picturesque. I wandered to the foot of them, bagging one partridge and four snipes. The latter were very plentiful, but I had only a few charges of shot.

The few labourers we met in this locality were all armed with long Arab matchlocks, swords, and knives; even a woman herding her two calves looked quite fierce, exemplifying the very unsettled state of the country. We were informed that Arab robbers frequently committed depredations close to the village. A fellow we met asked me if I was not a Russian. I told him to what country I belonged, and he at once became civil and attentive; even beat a bush or two, where he said there might be a hare, and asked me to accept of his hospitality, frequently repeating, "Englese taib kâteer" (the English are very good). The few ancient ruins that I observed here are not of much interest.

After walking about till I was tired, I returned on board, and we sailed in the evening for Latakieh, where, the following day, we went for a few hours'

walk through the town and suburbs. This is the ancient port of Laodicea, which, if history may be relied upon, once was capable of containing a thousand galleys. It has been so frequently overthrown by earthquakes that the greater portion of the present town is a mass of ruins; there are, however, interesting remains of its former greatness, and it is rather a pretty-looking old place, full of crumbling arches and towers, with a surrounding wall, built at different periods and by various architects, giving a strange, incongruous appearance to the whole.

There was an outbreak here a month previous to our visit, when the Mahomedans wanted to put the whole of the Christians to death, but they now seem very peaceable, and were most polite to us in two or three houses that we entered. Indeed, I might have enjoyed the hospitality of half the town; for I may here state that I had made it a rule to keep clear of all professional guides, ciceroni, or dragomen, under whatever designation they might introduce themselves. They are most provoking cheats, and prevent one mixing with the inhabitants of the town visited; besides, they are all, of course, well known, and the stranger who is seen with any of them is instantly marked as a "griff," and a fair subject for every kind of imposition. Here, too, we

were beyond the beat of professional guides, and got on much better without them, obtaining so much more general information and amusement that I determined to travel through Palestine independent of any dragoman.

This town is built on a rising ground, surrounded by groves of orange, fig, and olive trees, with well-watered gardens. It has long been famous for its tobacco, of which we made some purchases.

The next morning our vessel sailed for Cyprus, which we reached in two days; and what a beautiful island it is! how well worthy of its selection by the Greeks as the birthplace of Cupid! We went on shore early and walked along the "Marino," a well-built and flourishing street facing the beach. After breakfast, we started off for a walk to the town of Lameco, in which, however, we found little to interest us. Some of the villas looked very comfortable, and had gardens in front, well-laid out. We called at a monastery, and the Greek priests very politely took us all over the building, and then into the refectory and gave us a good cup of coffee; afterwards conducting us to the top of the belfry, from which we had a complete view of the surrounding country. It is not only bare, through destitution of trees, but only a small portion of the land is culti-

vated; nevertheless, the ground seems productive, and would bear a much larger population than at present occupies it. Here we were not a little amused listening to a number of small boys busy learning the Greek alphabet; their Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta, droned in the sing-song Asiatic manner, fell oddly on the ear.

On one occasion I wandered away into the country, attracted by its fresh and agreeable scenery. Numberless wild-flowers decked the plains, particularly a species of heath, which had a very sweet scent; and, finally, I came to a garden of oranges with the fruit ripe on the trees. Delicious they looked to me, heated with my long walk, and wistfully I was gazing at them through the tall prickly pear hedge, but no owner appeared who might be induced to sell. I felt no inclination to take by force here—a plan sometimes necessary in the wild countries I had traversed; and, besides, the owner might be poor. I was revolving in my mind how to obtain the tempting fruit from the garden of Venus (for here it was, according to the strange legendary tale, that she passed much of her time), when, lo! the goddess herself appeared among the trees in the form of a pretty nut-brown country lass, in a short red petticoat, blue bodice, and long black elf locks

fastened up with a scarlet silk handkerchief. I commanded just enough Greek to explain what I wanted, and showed her a few small pieces of silver. She laughingly agreed to give me some oranges, and, while she climbed a tree, I found a hole in the hedge, through which I got into the garden. My little maid was high up the tree, shaking down the ripe fruit, not thinking how much of a well-rounded ancle she was showing, till, on glancing downwards, she saw where I stood, and her well-feigned anger knew no bounds. Both Greek and oranges were hurled fast and furiously at my luckless head. Nevertheless, we made peace together; and, gathering up our oranges, sat down under the cool shade to eat the delicious fruit. We laughed and joked, without a thought of anything but the present: so merry had we become, that one might have sworn that the goddess of love had put spirit in her fruit, when a horrid old scolding woman suddenly arrived, who claimed what appeared to us the unnatural position of proprietor to our rustic maid; and sad and tearful might have been the finale to her girlish mirth, mournful as the last boar-hunt of Adonis to the goddess, had it not been for that old-woman-like vice usually termed avarice. The old lady took the silver the young one had despised; and

without further adventure of any sort, I returned to the vessel.

After another day's wandering on this fair island, we shaped our course for, and in due time arrived at, Beyrout, and as the morning broke, gazed for the first time on Lebanon's hoary peaks. The harbour is commanded by an old grey tower, much battered by Sir Charles Napier during the short but decisive war against Mahomed Ali. Next day I searched the bazaar for some traps necessary for the long ride now before me through the Holy Land, and was fortunate in picking up a pair of good saddle-bags and long untanned leather boots, very serviceable, and the produce of the country, which would have the advantage of attracting little or no attention during my sojourn amongst the natives of Syria.

Beyrout is a fine, large, and really flourishing town, with both English and French houses of business, also American, Italian, and Greek merchants. The latter seem to get on capitally as general dealers, and make more money than any other nation in the Levant. As Greeks they are proverbially shrewd and cunning, often, I fear, too much so to be consistent with gentlemanly behaviour, but I have known of many bright exceptions to this too general accusation.

We sailed again the following evening, and in the morning passed by Acre, a strong-looking old-fashioned fortress, still bearing most evident marks on its ruined grey towers, of Sir Charles Napier's bombardment. Steaming along the coast, we passed close under Mount Carmel with its large white monastery, towering high over the green fertile-looking plain of Sharon. The weather was fine, the sun shining brightly, without the heat and glare of a tropical climate; the Mediterranean was calm and deeply blue as the vault of heaven above us; and thus, under the most agreeable and propitious circumstances we approached the Holy Land.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HOLY LAND.

Arrival at Joppa—Events connected with the Port—Landing—The Custom-house—The Author's Costume—Search for a Lodging—Arab Hospitality—Riding into the Country—The Plain of Sharon—Spring-tide beauty of Palestine—Ramleh, the Ancient Arimathea—Latin Convent—The Martyr's Tower—View of Palestine from the Summit—The Priest's Cheer—The Hill Country of Judea—The Ladron Pass—Valley of Beth-horon—The Distant Mediterranean—Valley of Jeremiah—Castle of Aboo-Gosh—Valley of Elah—Looking for Jerusalem—The Holy City within View—Enthusiasm of the Pilgrims.

PALESTINE! the Holy Land! This day be ever memorable to me, for it is the hour of the accomplishment of the oft-expressed desire, the earnest, longing hope of many a day long gone. My sympathetic reader, if here, would unite with me in the exclamation of joy. It is the "Promised Land" that lies before me: the scene of our Saviour's trials, and of his last Passion: the land which so many weary Christians have reached as pilgrims, desiring but to kneel and kiss the Holy Sepulchre, and then content to die; or, in other days, as warriors of the Cross, in a fierce crusade against the Moslem that had seized the land and

desecrated the places made—oh! how sacred—by the sojourn of the Son of God on earth!

All hail to thee, Joppa, where I have at length landed and my foot has first touched the blessed soil. Joppa! or Jaffa, as they now call it. As I stand and gaze upon the picturesque little town, I will not descant upon the miserable habitations, as most modern travellers do, blind even to the most luxuriant gardens that surround it, and unmindful of the crushing Turkish government, that has destroyed commerce and impoverished the inhabitants. No! in this land let us devote ourselves to all that is pleasurable in the present scene, and to the absorbing interest of the past. This is no place for you, ye scoffers! nor for you, ye "thoroughly practical"—ye worshippers of Mammon, who look with contemptuous glance on the barrenness of the land that yields you no wealth. Above all, avaunt! ye self-sufficient followers of Voltaire, for in all that I have now to say ye can have no part or interest whatever; —or if in one sceptical bosom there is still the germ of that delicate flower, "faith," then, weak, wavering, and erring mortal! go visit the Holy Land; devote, for once, whatever energy of heart and soul thou hast to the truth, and so believing, return a wiser and a happier man.

As we look on the little town standing on a hill that rises abruptly from the sea, let us consider the scenes that have here taken place in the world's history. It was at this port that Jonah embarked for Tarshish; and this was King Solomon's chief entrepôt. Here were imported the cedars from Lebanon used in building the great Temple at Jerusalem. It was here that Peter saw the vision in Simon the Tanner's house, of such vast import to us all. And to advance to a more recent date, it was here that Napoleon committed one of his greatest crimes, the poisoning of his sick soldiers and the massacre of four thousand prisoners. It is not unworthy of remembrance, too, that heathen mythology fixed on this spot as the place where the lovely Andromeda was exposed to the sea-monster, and rescued by Perseus—a subject so exquisitely painted in the Borghese Gallery at Rome.

We landed in the evening with some difficulty; for the weather was stormy, and the waves broke high over the outer wall of the harbour, which has evidently been built as a sort of breakwater to allow of the ships to ride in safety inside; for in those days they were small and did not require much depth of water. This was and is the sole seaport of Judea, and according to our present ideas, very small.

Solomon's ships could neither have been large nor numerous. On landing we were conducted to the custom-house, and had some trouble to pass our property, though we had little enough; one pair of pack saddles carried the whole. The arms I wore attracted attention, not because I wore arms, for in this country, where there is no protection for life and property but the strong hand, all go armed; but the fashion and style of mine attracted the admiration of the bearded Turks and swarthy Arabs, who were curious to know who the stranger was, dressed *à la Asiatic* and speaking Arabic. My usual dress, and that which I found most cool and comfortable, was at this time and during my travels in Syria, full Asiatic trousers; over them, and coming up to the thigh, strong tawny-coloured leather boots that required no blacking; a loose, coarse white silk shirt, fastened round the waist with a Syrian scarf that held my pistols and hunting-knife; a long, dark-coloured "ubâee," or toga, over all; and the cool Arab silk "kafeeâ" on my head; while my old friend and companion through many a day, my trusty rifle, was never distant from my hand. This costume being entirely oriental, had the advantage of attracting little attention, while it was loose and cool, and in every way more easy and comfortable than a

European dress. It would not, however, for obvious reasons, be advisable for a traveller to adopt an Asiatic dress, unless he could speak the language of the country and adapt himself to many of its customs.

After getting clear of the customs office, we commenced inquiries for a lodging, and went in the first instance to a convent built on or near the site of the house of Simon the Tanner. The fat superior kept us waiting in the refectory for some time, till it grew quite dark, and then told us that we could not lodge there, for their convent was full of priests and Catholic pilgrims. On reaching the street again we found it dark and raining hard; but walking on, we saw lights in one of the best-looking houses, and the door open, by no means a usual circumstance after night-fall in Syria. Instantly taking advantage of our good fortune, we entered, and as I put down my pack-saddle and rifle by the fire, we claimed the hospitality of the East. The host, a fine-looking old fellow with long beard, ordered his wife to prepare supper, and accordingly some fine fresh fish from the Mediterranean, whose waves could be heard as we sat by the fire, were soon hissing in the frying-pan. With eggs, coarse but good unleavened bread, and coffee, thick and without milk or sugar, as is the Arabic custom, we made an excellent repast, and after a chibouk of

fine Jebellee tobacco, climbed up some difficult steps, where, in the upper regions, we found clean and white, though coarse sheets, being spread most comfortably over a straw bed that smelt sweet and fresh, by the host's buxom daughters, who speedily decamped, wishing us pleasant slumbers.

I was awake at early dawn, and, looking out of the little lattice window, had a magnificent view of the shore, gently washed by waters of the deepest blue, while the clear rosy sky and fresh breeze promised fine weather for the onward pilgrimage. We (for I sometimes use the plural in reference to myself and an occasional companion) quickly dressed and descended to the little garden by the beach, where one of the ruddy-brown daughters of the house brought us a bowl of warm milk, and shortly after the whole family appeared. They did not think we would get a horse either to hire or purchase, but the host sent his son to the bazaar to try if a carriage or other conveyance could be had; though, indeed, we cared little whether we walked or rode. As it proved, horses were not to be obtained without waiting; so we effected a bargain with the owner of two respectable donkeys, and purchased a thick Arab blanket to throw over our pack-saddles in case of rain; returned to thank our host, and get ready for the

road. We could not offer payment for the kind hospitality that had been accorded, but slipped a broad piece into the hand of the son, who had been assisting to fasten the pack-saddle on one ass, while I put my saddle on the other; and thus we departed from Joppa, with a kindly blessing and "God speed you" from our hospitable host and his family.

The morning air was fresh and clear and most invigorating, as it blew over my bare chest, while I led the way, followed by the ass-driver, through a massive old gate-way close to a high square tower, both evidently the work of the Crusaders, and gained the country outside. Here the path led through numerous orange and melon gardens, the fruit of which was ripe, and proved delicious and most acceptable later in the day. For about two miles gardens extend on either hand, famous for the fine fruit they produce. The melons are highly scented and delicately fine; the oranges of a rich dark colour, sweet, and very juicy; and, as the last garden was passed, we entered upon the broad, and level, and lovely plain of Sharon.

How fertile! how beautiful it is! I had often longed to be here to judge for myself, there being so many descriptions of the Holy Land widely differing from each other. Some, like Lamartine, have

found it all that is pleasing; others agree with Voltaire, who wrote that he would not receive it as a present if offered him by the Sultan, so blighted was it. No doubt much depends upon the spirit with which one visits the country, but something also upon the season. Towards the end of a hot summer, every leaf, every blade of grass is brown and dried up; whilst, in spring, all is fresh and promising. I had chosen the spring-time for my pilgrimage, and found Palestine in its glory. The whole plain of Sharon was one vast garden of beautiful modest little wild-flowers, that had already coloured our feet and ankles with the hues of the rainbow. Amidst others, we marked the white and scarlet anemone, the blue iris, crimson and white asters, numerous lilies, and the beautiful cistus—the flower supposed to be alluded to in the Bible as the "rose of Sharon."

But few patches of this the most fertile plain in the East are cultivated, and not a homestead gladdens the eye. Here and there, beyond the call of the wayfarer, were small herds of cattle and sheep; the husbandman fearfully keeping out of sight, or hurriedly driving his flock away from those that to him appeared just as likely to be robbers as quiet travellers; indeed, there are more of the former, in one shape or another, than the latter. As we journeyed on

through this interesting plain, we thought much of the tribes of Israel, the chosen people of God, to whom this land had been promised and given; and though, as a punishment for their disobedience and many crimes, they have been scattered over the face of the earth, yet here again their reunion is to take place.

The sun was getting low, and we approached the mountains of Judea, when a high, ancient tower appeared, and just beyond it the town of Ramleh, the Arimathea of the Bible, the city of "Joseph, the counsellor, the good man and just, who claimed the body of Jesus." It must have been a large town once, to judge from the ruins round it; now it is but a village. We went to a Latin convent, in a retired position, and, knocking at a great, strongly built gateway, a grey old monk reconnoitred from a loophole overhead, and asked, in Arabic, what we wanted. At the request for a night's lodging, he at first seemed inclined to refuse; but at once opened the gate, with a crash of old bolts and bars, on our telling him, in the best Latin that we could muster, that we were countrymen of Richard Cœur de Lion, who is supposed to have built the celebrated church of Saint George at Ludd, the ancient Lydda, close to this, where it is said the patron saint of England

suffered martyrdom. Be this as it may, both names are right well known in this part of the world; the first to the educated, the second to every one. A rude picture of Saint George and the Dragon is a most common ornament in both church and house.

A shed in the court-yard of the convent was made over to the donkeys and drivers, while we were shown into a room, clean and tolerably comfortable. We met in a separate apartment some pilgrims, also bound for Jerusalem; distant wanderers they seemed, from northern parts of the world; men and women in grotesque costumes, never intended for the warm south. We found none of them interesting; and, as it wanted an hour to the convent supper, we walked to the tower before mentioned, called "The Martyr's." It is attached to the ruins of a large building, consisting of rows of Gothic arches and crumbling cloisters, now used apparently as cattle-sheds. It looks like an old cathedral, and is evidently of Christian origin. It was here that Baldwin, King of Jerusalem, took refuge with some 200 horsemen, after suffering defeat from an army of several thousand Saracens; and his life was only secured by a grateful Arab chief, whose wife had been chivalrously saved by the Christian king during a successful foray formerly made beyond Jordan.

The view from the top of this tower in the evening sunset was very splendid. Below lay stretched the goodly plain, bounded by the deep blue of the distant Mediterranean; to the west, Ramleh, with its peaceful convent; and Ludd, with its ruins of the church of St. George, and the rough mountains of Judea for a background, warmly ruddy in the fading light. Still and quiet was the hour, and every sense drank in the soothing charms of this our first extended view of Palestine. It happened to be Friday, and the supper provided for priests and pilgrims all together in the refectory was not very tempting, consisting of dried fish stewed in olive oil, and a lump of coarse bread. However, after a chat with the grey-bearded superior, we managed to get a cup of good wine, with fruit and sweet bread. The old priest asked us to accompany the other pilgrims to Jerusalem, as there was danger of their being robbed, for they were neither strong nor well armed. This we promised, and retired early to bed.

The next morning, we were up and ready for the road by five o'clock, for we had a long journey before us. The old father met us with a kind word, and one of the brethren brought a cup of hot coffee. We accompanied the pilgrims, who were Catholics, to the chapel; and, after leaving our

mite in the subscription box, we saddled our donkeys, and bade our hosts farewell.

We proceeded for five or six miles over a rich verdant plain, and then entered through a pass the hill country of Judea. Here the eye is no longer refreshed by the beauty of Sharon. A complete change comes over the scene. The country is almost a wilderness; not even a verdant sward visible. The hum of bees, the low of cattle, and even the music of the goat's bell, were all left behind at the mouth of the narrow pass of Ladron. There are the remains of an old Gothic fort and church—probably a resting-place and defence for the pilgrims; for this spot has ever been the haunt of Arab robbers. For centuries they have gleaned a rich harvest from the tens of thousands of passing pilgrims, from almost all parts of the world.

The hills here rise in terraces; the naked strata of grey limestone protruding at intervals like seats in a stadium. The defile is, indeed, well adapted for robbery. We led the way, walking with rifle in rest, but all was quiet "as the mist still slumbering on the hills;" and on we marched without adventure, passing now through a deep narrow gorge, with bare rocky precipices on either side,

where a death-like stillness reigned, and again through ravines clothed with thickets of dwarf oak and fern. About noon, we sat down in the shade of one of these trees, where there was a good spring of clear water, and ate our frugal meal. Anon we rose, and, passing through the difficult gorge or valley of Beth-horon, ascended to the height above, and obtained a last distant glimpse of the blue waters of the Mediterranean.

We next reached the valley of Jeremiah, at one end of which is a castle—now in ruins, or partly so—though still a place of strength. It has long been of great celebrity as the residence of Aboogosh, a famous Arab chief and freebooter, who was accustomed to take black mail from all passers, and was the terror of the annual cavalcade of pilgrims. Ibrahim Pasha, son of Mahomed Ali, who conquered Syria, compelled the chief to surrender; but not before a very large part of his army had been cut up. This robber is still said to be alive, and it was but lately that he paid a visit to Constantinople, taking with him sufficient presents to ensure his life and liberty.

Thus pleasantly musing on all that has happened in the country around us, we passed along the nar-

narrow stony pathway, to the point where the defile opens out by a brook into the valley of Elah. Here it is said David fought with Goliath. A few villages and patches of vineyards rise on the hill on either side. To borrow an Eastern simile, the sun having been a traveller since early morn, tired and weary, now approached his palace in the west, and threw the valleys into shade, but still no Jerusalem was in sight. As each hill was mounted, each summit gained, anxiously the weary eye looked onward, but still no city. The mountains became more black and desolate, the road more rocky. Many of the weaker pilgrims were in despair, and one poor woman wept from anxiety and fear of night falling, and leaving her on this cold, stony road.

At last, and very slowly, another height is surmounted, and suddenly an involuntary exclamation bursts forth from all. It is the Holy City! it is Jerusalem! it is Mount Zion, that has burst suddenly in view! How impressive! but oh! how solitary, how desolate!—and now every pilgrim has thrown himself on his knees. Wanderers from the soft south and the cold-biting north, from the Church of Rome and of Armenia, of Greece and

Russia, all with moistened eyes and quivering lips —pilgrims of both sexes, of all ages—have humbled themselves before the one great God in prayer. How then shall even the cold, stern Protestant refuse to join in their humble thanksgiving to the Almighty?

CHAPTER IX.

JERUSALEM AND ITS ENVIRONS.

Peculiarity of the Holy City—Antiquity of its Fortifications—Commanding Site; its restored Beauty—Within the Walls—The Holy Sepulchre—The Mount of Olives—Panorama of the Holy Land—Road to Bethany—Tombs in the Valley of Jehoshaphat—The Author's Lodging—A Turkish Bath—Church of the Holy Sepulchre—Devotional and Chivalric Associations—The Houses of Jerusalem—Peculiarities of Construction—Use of the Arch—Visit to the Bazaar—Unexpected Hospitality—A Jewish Interior—New Acquaintances—Esther and Miriam—The Story of a Jewish Merchant—Visit to the Pool of Bethesda—Rambles among the Tombs—Pool of Siloam—Valley of the Sons of Hinnom—Garden of Gethsemane—The Brook of Kedron—Mosque of Omar—Village of Bethany—Sepulchre of Lazarus—Pool of Gihon—Enrogel—Strangers' Burial-ground—The Golden Gate—David's Tomb—Characteristics of the Jews.

JERUSALEM, vision of peace! after many days' sojourn within thy walls, and daily wanderings, visiting scenes around thee so often mentioned in the Book of Books, so intimately connected with our Saviour and His awful Passion, how shall I describe thee? It is difficult to give any adequate idea of these scenes; no account that I have ever read, and no delineation that I have seen, is worthy of the reality. How then dare I, a simple observer, and no artist,

in words attempt such a theme? If ambitious of what is called a success, I should pause here; but I only seek to record my humble impressions, and they were not of that disappointing nature that so many seem to have felt. We hear it frequently remarked that Jerusalem is like any other Turkish town; but I can avouch it is not like any between Constantinople and Bagdad, or between Damascus and Egypt. Even its external aspect is materially different, for it is surrounded with high stone walls, after the style of the middle ages, fortified with towers and turrets, built for the most part by the Crusaders; though some of the towers, particularly a square one over the Jaffa gate, are of much older date. This entire fortification is still kept in good repair by the Turkish Government to prevent the ingress of the wild Arab tribes of the Jordan.

The site of the city, particularly Mount Zion, is most commanding; the aspect of the surrounding hills most striking, but now so desolate, so cold, so lonely, as to cause the strongest inclination to weep. And yet who can look upon it and doubt that the whole scene was once most beautiful! This indeed was long ago, when the name of "Vision of Peace" was given to the Holy City, when the brook Kedron watered her rich gardens of orange and pomegranate,

when her heights were terraced with vines, and crowned with groves of olives and palms. Could these rocky hills be now again clothed with foliage, could the sound of music and gay laughter be again heard, Jerusalem would yield the palm of beauty to no city in the world.

Within the walls, the Holy Sepulchre and its church command the first attention; for, whatever opinion one may form of the identity of the actual spot where our Lord was laid, it is impossible to visit the alleged locality without feelings and associations of the deepest interest. Within a few yards, one side or the other, the body of Our Lord must have lain. For *this spot* thousands of noble Christians have fought and bled. At this spot millions of Christians—let us hope a fair proportion of them good men and true;—have devoutly prayed. I do not argue for the authenticity of the site. It is difficult to believe that the church of the Holy Sepulchre could have been situated without the ancient walls, as we know the tomb itself was; and even if at one time the place of sepulture was known, the temptation to the early Christians to build the church that was to hold the relics they so highly valued, within the line of fortifications, must have been very strong. We do not come here to cavil, and it seems

even probable that the Almighty should not *will* the place of sepulture to be known, to save us from the great temptation to idolize it.

But faith is strong in many of the holy places outside the walls. Here nature has left such clear and distinct land-marks, that the descriptions given in the Bible must, and always do, carry conviction to the mind of the visitor. At first, before the mind becomes harmonized to the scene around, it appears almost unreal; it is like a dream.' But how enjoyable, to wander, day after day, out by the gate of St. Stephen, on the road leading to Bethany; the gate through which our Saviour entered the city for the last time; to pass down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, the great burying-place of the Jews; to cross the brook Kedron, and to enter the garden of Gethsemane, with its noble olive-trees at least centuries old! Here, probably within a few feet of where we are standing, our Saviour was betrayed. Musing on, what joy to climb the Mount of Olives! It needs not these still living witnesses, these revered olive-trees, to prove the identity of this place; and here, reader, under the shade of one of them, near the top of the Mount, how all absorbing in interest to sit and gaze on this most perfect prospect! Jerusalem lying in the foreground, with the greater part of

Judea, and the mountains of Moab in the far distance, while to the left lies the valley of the Jordan, looking verdant amid the dull-coloured rocky mountains, and intersected by a silver thread leading into that vast lake that looks like molten lead, well termed the Dead Sea. One ought to be thankful to be able to come here, and musing alone, read the *only true guide-book to the Holy Land.* And then descending and holding a little to the south, through innumerable tombs of Israel, partly defaced and covered with grass and wild-flowers, to follow the road leading to Bethany. It is the same path, now worn deep into the sandstone rock, that our Saviour so often trod when he visited Lazarus whom he loved, and the members of that most highly favoured family, Mary and her sister Martha; and it was on this pathway that He came riding on the humblest of animals, when the people strewed the way with their garments and with boughs, when they shouted "Hosannah! save, I beseech thee!" A little further on is Bethany, a short journey from the city, a poor desolate little village, but still to this day bearing its ancient name.

On the summit of the Mount of Olives a spot is pointed out, now surrounded by the walls of a Turkish mosque, from which they relate our Lord

ascended to Heaven. Descending from this toward Jerusalem, the traveller may visit the tombs described as those of Absalom, Saint James, and the prophet Zachariah, all in the valley of Jehoshaphat. They are strange, quaint, and very antique tombs in the midst of thousands. The Jews ascribe them to the above-named personages from tradition.

On the evening of our arrival at Jerusalem we found lodging at the house of a German, formerly a Jew, but now a convert to the Protestant mission in the Holy City. The house was clean and comfortable, and by far the best place for a Christian traveller to lodge at. I made it my head-quarters; but being ever anxious to mix with the people of the country in which I travelled, I often accepted of the proffered hospitality of a Jew, whose acquaintance I fortunately made.

Two days after our arrival in Jerusalem, I rose early and went to the Turkish bath, a most luxurious, refreshing, and health-restoring ablution, and one always indulged in before and after a long journey in the East. The gradual steaming in vaulted chambers, of different degrees of temperature, followed by the quick rubbing and manipulation of the body,—then the plunge, the bathing, the soft snowy linen in which we wrap; and, after the

exhaustion of this process, the rest on a soft divan, in a marble hall, scented with sweet flowers, a flowing glass of delicious iced sherbet, a mild nargeelay, with the drowsy murmurs of a fountain to lull one to sleep—such is Eastern luxury, only perfectly expressed by the one Arabic word *kief*.

After my cool flowing robes had been duly arranged by the silent, attentive slaves of the bath, I proceeded on a second visit to the church of the Holy Sepulchre, and heard mass. The music and singing were good, and the whole scene most impressive. The Latin or Roman Catholic service was alone going on; the church was nearly filled, but without crush; several creeds were represented among the congregation—Greek, Latin, Armenian, and Copt—but almost all the worshippers were in Eastern costume. The scene was more pleasing than that which takes place at Easter. In the centre of the church, under a lofty dome, is the reputed sepulchre or tomb of our Saviour — an imposing building of white marble, oriental in style, having a cupola supported by columns. This forms the body of the church, and belongs to the Roman Catholics. The arcade round the dome is divided into chapels, as usual in churches in Italy. These chapels belong to the Greek, Armenian, Copt,

and Maronite Christians; the two former having also chapels annexed to the main building. We entered into the inner chamber of the tomb, "the holiest of holy places;" and here, with bended head and knee, watched the numerous votaries of both sexes enter and pray with the greatest fervour, weep over and kiss a marble sarcophagus, which the priests have put there as an emblem of *the* sepulchre "hewn out of the rock."

Though, as I have previously remarked, one may question the fact of this being the actual spot where our Lord was laid, who can impugn the poetry of the numerous traditions connected with it?—who can refuse to call this a sacred spot, in which every Christian must feel a deeply thrilling interest, hallowed for ages as it is by the pilgrimages and prayers of all creeds and sects, and by the purest blood of Europe, willingly shed in many a fierce siege and battle fought by the Crusaders for this shrine. It is undoubtedly very common, and certainly annoying, to hear ridiculous fables told by both priests and dragomen of what they call the holy places, and their pointing to the spots where the cock crew, where Christ, while carrying the cross, sat fainting. Even the scenes referred to in parables do not escape; the stones that "would have called out"

have been shown; but most visitors of late years have remarked too much on this failing, common to all the world, and in Jerusalem as well as in other places. These tales are implicitly believed by many ignorant people; but surely it is a weak and frivolous mind that can only take in and retain for publication to the world the wretched story of some half-bred Arab, told in the hope that a show of his knowledge of a few incidents of sacred or profane history, and his ability to point out the alleged places of their occurrence, will entitle him to demand an extra piastre.

Nor is the city of Jerusalem so squalid and miserable as many writers would lead one to expect. It has, of course, the oriental streets and rough pavement, but it is solidly built and decidedly cleaner than Constantinople or Smyrna. The houses are entirely built of stone, with this peculiarity, that not a single wooden beam or rafter is used in their construction. Thus, the ceiling of every room is arched, and each house has its small dome. This is doubtless caused by the great scarcity of timber—a scarcity common to Syria and Arabia, and, as necessity is the mother of invention, probably this circumstance led to the construction of the arch which was first used by the Saracens, and afterwards introduced into Europe.

One morning, soon after our arrival, I strolled through the bazaar. Here both Jews and Mahomedans expose their wares for sale in the little "dookhan" or shop of the East, about the size of a cab, without a seat, the front part of which lets down into the street till level, where it is supported with anything that comes first to hand, being simply a shutter with the hinges at the bottom instead of the sides. On this board the goods are exposed for sale, while, just within it, chibouk in hand, the dookhandar sits cross-legged. If a Moslem, he smokes, refills his chibouk and smokes again; he cares not whether you purchase his goods or not. If a Jew, he will garrulously praise the traveller and his own stores together, whisperingly abuse those of his neighbour the Mahomedan, quietly and insidiously endeavour to dispose of any article that may have attracted attention, to the best advantage.

I was here allured by a stall, unusually gay with horse and donkey trappings, many-coloured carpet saddle-bags, quaint saddles hung all over with tassels, bridles of cord covered with red cloth attached to bits such as Europeans only see in collections of antiquities. They were not so strange to me though, who had been a wanderer for many years in distant Eastern countries; and as I wished to provide my-

self as soon as possible with a good horse and the necessary equipments, I entered into conversation with the old man of the shop, who invited me to sit down on a carpet placed *vis-à-vis* on the shutter, and handed the usual chibouk. After a silent whiff, we commenced the intricate manœuvres of an Eastern bargain. In the heat of an amicable argument, I dropped a word or two of Hindostanee, a language with which I was familiar, and in which Arabic words frequently occur. The old man started and asked me, in good Hindostanee, if I spoke the words of Ind? On my answering in the affirmative, he rose, seized me by the hand with much warmth, and asked many questions about India. On learning that I was a stranger in the town, he told his son Ibrahim to take charge of the shop, and declared the stranger must come home with him and accept his hospitality.

Leaving the shop, we proceeded to the Jewish quarter, for my new acquaintance was an Israelite. He was tall, though slightly bent with age; his high forehead and fine features were set off to advantage by a large white turban over the red tarbush; a long snowy beard overhung a deep-coloured oriental vest, from underneath which appeared at the chest and neck, and hanging in

deep folds over his hands, a white silk khumese, or shirt, from a Damascus loom; over all, he wore a large black ubâee, or toga. We passed under the old arch that leads out of the bazaar to the south, and through several streets, which became more narrow and dirty in the Jewish quarter, until we arrived at a low arched door, which he opened with a latch-key. We then entered a clean neatly-paved court, with a few flowers in boxes that smelt sweet and refreshing after leaving the bazaar and streets. Here we surprised an old slave sleeping in the sun, who evidently had not expected his master for hours. He was quietly rebuked, and ordered to prepare nargeelays and coffee.

Proceeding up a narrow staircase, we crossed a small hall, and not a little to my surprise, entered a large vaulted chamber, into which a subdued light was allowed to enter through green Venetian blinds. The room was hung with maroon-coloured curtains of Damascus, and furnished in eastern style, with soft carpet and divan covered with Indian stuff. The old man noticed my pleased surprise at the contrast between the miserable exterior of the house and the richly-furnished, comfortable room we now sat down in, and remarked on the danger of appearing to be wealthy to the outside world under the

Turkish Government. He made me sit in the right-hand corner of the divan (the place of honour), and I had answered a few questions regarding my journey from Joppa, when the slave entered, now cleanly dressed in white, with coffee and nargeèlays.

After a short silence, broken only by the hubble-bubble noise of the water in the hookahs, the Jew clapped his hands twice, and quickly, from behind the curtains on the opposite side of the room, entered a little maiden. While a few words in Hebrew passed between her and my host, I had but time to mark a slender and delicate-looking frame, oval face, and large dark eyes, and as she turned to depart, a profusion of long black hair in many plaits hanging down over a brown silk dress, and we were again alone. I had put some questions about Jerusalem, and found my host most willingly communicative, when the little damsel again entered, accompanied by her elder sister, and both bearing trays with deliciously cool sherbet and various sweetmeats, of which I was obliged to partake; the youngest pushing into my mouth a spoon filled with apricot preserve, a usage of Eastern hospitality. When they had set down the trays, the Hebrew said, "Daughters, this is a stranger from the distant land where your much-loved mother lies:" on which Miriam,

the eldest, made a low obeisance, while Esther, who appeared to be about twelve years of age, came up, and taking my hand, kissed it respectfully.

I received this little attention with Eastern stoicism; but he must indeed be a disciple of Plato's coldest philosophy, who could see and converse with Miriam, and not feel the effect of her peculiar attractions. She was just budding into womanhood, and may have seen sixteen summers. She had none of the usual features of a Jewess, but was very fair, with an immense quantity of auburn hair. Hers were soft, dreamy, hazel eyes, the nose petite but delicately formed; indeed all the features were good; but it was the mouth and its pensive, slightly melancholy smile that made the deepest impression. Her dress, purely oriental in its simplicity, was without ornament, and arranged with much taste. The tight-fitting "shash," or upper dress of dark silk, showed her softly-rounded figure to advantage; and below the skirt of it appeared only a few inches of "sheentian" trousers, drawn together and confined above the ankles; but so full and long, that they fell over the tie in many folds upon the smallest of feet that looked white as the driven snow, peeping out of black velvet Turkish

slippers. But I must not allow admiration of the daughters to render me forgetful of the father, whose name, I learned, was Joseph, and who gave the following account of himself:—

My host was a native of Bagdad, where his father had been a wealthy merchant. At the age of thirteen, he had made a journey with his father and a large caravan of merchants with camels across the desert to Damascus, and back to Bagdad. The numerous adventures both in city and desert during this trip gave him a desire to travel; and at eighteen he commenced trading with the ports of the Persian Gulf, and set up a branch house at Busheer, making in three years a considerable sum of money, which, at his earnest request, his father doubled, and he sailed for India to establish his father's name there also. Arriving at Bombay, he embarked the whole of his means in the purchase of indigo and Indian stuffs, on which he was sure of a very large profit at Bagdad; and with this cargo, he sailed in a vessel bound for Bussorah. On the voyage they experienced one of those hurricanes so common in the Indian seas; the ship was driven out of her course, lost her masts, and was ultimately wrecked at the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb. The luckless merchant was here

washed on shore with some of the crew, but lost his entire property; and after undergoing the greatest dangers and hardships for three months, at last reached his father's house ill, foot-sore, and in rags.

Poor Joseph, not being well received by his father, a stiff-necked old Israelite, with whom poverty was a sin, joined the first caravans that were proceeding to Damascus, where he had been kindly treated by the merchant with whom he had lived. His old friend, who had no son, received him with open arms, and soon gave him the principal business of his house to transact, which he did with such success that he became the acknowledged heir of his principal, who gave him his only daughter in marriage. We may be sure that some of the happiest days of Joseph's life were spent at Damascus; but some time after the marriage, his father-in-law died, and the Turkish Pasha of the city seized a great portion of the property, declaring it was confiscated, as the owner had died without male heirs.

After many troubles, Joseph left Damascus with his young wife, and the little funds he had been able to collect, and proceeded to Bagdad; but misfortune still followed him; for he was attacked and plundered

by Arabs in the desert, and again reduced to poverty. He found on his arrival that his father had been some time at rest; but he had not forgotten the absent son in his will, and Joseph was again the master of a small sum. He invested it in various merchandise, and again proceeded down the Euphrates to Bussorah, from whence he sailed to Bombay, where, after some successful traffic, he went to Calcutta, and resided there many years. After the death of his wife, having amassed a considerable fortune, he formed the intention of returning to his native country, which he at last effected without any loss; but at Bagdad he found that his relations were dead, and he himself forgotten. Then came the desire so strong in the mind of every Israelite, in whatever part of the world he may be born, to journey in his old age to the Holy City of Zion, there to sink into the grave, and be gathered to his fathers in the valley of Jehoshaphat. He reached Jerusalem in safety, with his son and two daughters, and all his worldly stores. He found there hundreds who had come on the same errand; but, unlike him, most of them were poor and starving. His heart yearned unto his poor brethren, collected from almost every corner of the world, and he occupied his time and means in relieving them; and the better to enable

him to do so, he still kept up a trade with the far East.

This long account of himself led to conversation with my host about cities and towns in India and trans-Gangetic India, where we had both sojourned; and anecdotes of people whom we had both met. Thus the time passed most pleasantly till the afternoon repast was announced, after which a walk was proposed round part of the walls of the city; and his son Ibrahim having joined us, we set out, proceeding by the Pool of Bethesda, to St. Stephen's Gate.

The Pool is a large deep oblong tank, the sides being composed of hewn stone, showing the remains of arched porches. The bottom was covered with earth, and a rank crop of weeds. Passing out of the gate, the way leads by a descent into the Valley of Jehoshaphat and across the brook Kedron. At this spot there is but little water in it, and the whole surrounding country looks dry and stony; the annual fall of rain having, there can be no doubt, greatly diminished since the groves and plantations of palms and olives were cut down by devastating armies.

In the valley of Jehoshaphat, my companions were in the part of Jerusalem peculiarly their

own, and they wearied not in relating traditions of the burial-ground of their fathers. Here the scattered tribes were again to meet; and here, on the last day, were they to be judged. The old man quoted with eagerness and energetic fervour the prophecies in the Old Testament regarding both it and the Mount of Olives, now lying right in front of us, and related traditions of the Tomb of Absalom, and of Zachariah, and what is called the Tomb of Saint James, all three quaint old sepulchres of hewn stone, of considerable height and size. "And to have this valley," said the old man, "for my resting-place is my only hope and desire." It is, indeed, a thickly-peopled City of the Dead. One can but walk on tombstones. Many, of great age, are fast crumbling to dust, with green tufts of grass, and gay wild-flowers springing up between them, and many straggling parties of Jews of both sexes here form melancholy groups mourning amongst the graves of their fathers.

Walking on, we visited the tombs of the prophets, ancient vaults so called from tradition, and passing southward, between the Mount of Offence and the city, arrived at the Pool of Siloam as the sun was setting. Here we sat down, drank of the clear cold spring, and in deep silence meditated on the sur-

rounding scene; till Ibrahim reminded us that the city gates would be closed for the night before dark. We rose and walked westward, up the Valley of the Sons of Hinnom, and entered at the Zion Gate. I would here have bid my friend adieu for the night; but Joseph would not listen to this, declaring that I must remain his guest. I felt flattered, and really delighted at so good a prospect of mixing with and seeing something of the domestic life of the Jews in their own city, which had been my most earnest desire. Indeed, it was always a principal object during my wanderings to live as much as possible on familiar terms with the people of the country I was in, for thus only can a stranger know the character, and social habits,—learn the language, and the mode of reasoning, and general bent of mind of the inhabitants.

During the succeeding few days, we visited the most interesting scenes round and near Jerusalem. One of the first mornings was spent in the garden of Gethsemane, a small enclosure, in which there are eight or ten olive-trees of incalculable age; their knotted and enormous stems, distorted and borne down with the weight of centuries, seem to be tearing out of the strong earth their great fantastically-twisted roots. Their real age has been

a subject of much speculation. One scientific visitor ventures on nineteen centuries and tradition; relates that under these very trees our Saviour loved to take refuge from the turmoil of the city; indeed, the description in the Bible is so clear, and coincides so well in every particular with this locality, that no one has ever raised a doubt against this being the spot where He was betrayed.

The garden of Gethsemane is close by the Brook of Kedron, well named "Darkness," for it is at the head of the valley of Jehoshaphat, close to the city, but yet in so deep a gorge between the hill on which the temple stood and the Mount of Olives, that no turmoil of busy voices could there reach the ear. It is a fitting spot for that awful scene of our Lord's agony, and well chosen by Judas for the perpetration of the blackest crime. Here the pilgrim may sit and enjoy that indescribable pleasure of allowing the imagination to work its will in the realms of fancy on the past; or, climbing half-way up the Mount of Olives, now green with the grass and wild-flowers of spring, rest by the ruins of a monastery built by the Crusaders, from which the eye may look down into the large court and mosque of Omar, where once the Temple of Solomon stood, and which occupies nearly one-fourth of the enclosed city. From this

spot one can best mark the different hills on which Jerusalem was built, though time has partially filled the hollows; and, as Josephus writes, the Asmonean kings cut down some of the highest tops, and threw the earth into the valleys.

Another most interesting walk, and somewhat longer, is the road winding round the south side of Mount Olivet to the little village of Bethany, the home of our Lord in his latter days. This village still bears its ancient name, and doubtless occupies the same spot—a very retired one in the small gorge of a hill; and here how the thoughts wander back to the time when the Messiah, mounted "on a colt, the foal of an ass," rode along this path to Jerusalem, while the people shouted and strewed their garments and branches in the way! along this path, a Sabbath-day's journey from Jerusalem, so often trod by Him, where Martha met Him coming from Jerusalem, and where He turned aside towards the sepulchre, and raised Lazarus from the dead! There is an old sepulchre on the hill behind the village, which tradition fixes as the scene of this miracle. It has all the appearance of having once been the common sepulchre of the village.

Another day we walked out by the Joppa gate to the Pool of Gihon, down the valley of the sons of

Hinnom to the fountain of Enrogel, where the limpid water gushes forth and irrigates some very fertile and pretty gardens, supposed to be those referred to as Solomon's. They are also termed by the Arabs the gardens of the kings. Enrogel was a boundary mark between the tribes of Benjamin and Judah, but it is more noted as marking the place where the children of Israel committed the great abomination of passing through the fire unto Moloch. Joseph's opinion was that his forefathers had doubtless been very wicked; that they were now suffering for it; but that the Ibin Israel were now a God-fearing people.

Here many parties of Jews and Moslems of both sexes were walking about or reclining under the shade of numerous olive-trees, which is almost the only tree growing in the locality. We strolled on down the valley of Kedron, where the water runs in a clear little brook, and climbing the hill to our right, visited the Aceldama, where, from the sepulchral inscriptions in Greek and various languages, it is evident many strangers have been interred. From this we climbed the hill of Evil Council, from which we obtained a magnificent view of Mount Zion and Jerusalem to the north, while on the opposite side the mountains of Moab were des-

cried in the blue and shadowy distance. Going down the east side of the hill, we entered the Bethlehem road, and returned to the city by the Joppa gate.

Walking round the city walls, I remarked a gate on the east side walled up, and, on inquiry, learned that it was the famous Golden Gate, of which there are many mysterious stories. Notwithstanding that it was built up, there is, I was told, always a party of Turkish soldiers on guard at it; for the Moslems believe, that if the Christians can once enter this gate, they will retake possession of the city. Inside of it is the court or grounds of the Mosque of Omar, next to Mecca and Medina held in the highest veneration by the Mahomedans. Walking round the wall to the south corner, we entered what is called the Tomb of David, over which is built an Armenian church, which occupies the summit of Mount Zion.

Thus agreeably I spent my time in Jerusalem with my Israelite friend, though still acknowledging my first residence as head-quarters. What further I observed of the Jews in their own land will form the subject of another chapter. Here I may add that no race in the East shows greater quickness of intellect and observation, or greater individual determination and assiduity in conjunction with the most perfect confederacy, than the descendants of

Abraham. No other race is so pure in descent with the exception of their brethren the desert Arabs of Arabia. Almost every other nation, incited by the fiercest barbarism, have persecuted and endeavoured to crush and utterly destroy the Jews, but they are, though scattered over the world, still holding fast together, the most prosperous, often the most accomplished, always the most interesting citizens of the country in which they reside.

CHAPTER X.

THE JEWS IN THEIR OWN LAND.

Early Rising—The Bath—Morning Coffee and Chibouk—Breakfast—Visiting and Gossiping—A Traveller's Tale—Talk of the Bible Prophecies—Hopes of the Jews—Visit to the Synagogues—Mode of Conducting the Services—Poor Jews—Mistaken Charity—Various Languages Spoken—Costume—Invitation to a Wedding—Street Costume of the Ladies—Assembly of the Guests—The Bride and Bridegroom—The Civil Contract—Law of Divorce—Conclusion of the Ceremony—Novel Mode of Dancing—Jewish Music—Ceremony of the Passover—Unleavened Bread.

Some particulars of my every-day life in the family of Joseph may be given without breach of confidence, as they illustrate the general manners and customs of an interesting people. As usual in the East, we rose at early dawn, when we often strolled to the Turkish bath, already described in the previous chapter. After the ablutions a lesson in colloquial Arabic was taken with the morning coffee and chibouk, followed by a walk to some of the *loca sancta* in the vicinity; or I reclined on Joseph's divan while Esther folded my turban and related every little

incident that was going on, spoken of, or done, in her little world, in the prettiest way possible. After which the whole family met to breakfast, which generally consisted of two or even three different kinds of bread, rice boiled in milk, sweetmeats, salad, and coffee.

Friends of the family often dropped in, both before and after breakfast, with a quiet "salam" (peace). They were welcomed and seated on the divan; then usually they would commence with "Peace to the stranger within your threshold: who is he?" By this time I had been obliged to give long accounts of myself and my wanderings, so that Miriam or Esther could answer the inquiry far better than I could for myself; and Miriam would relate how the stranger had once lived near a beautiful valley, where the wild orange and citron blossomed, their sweet scent lending aid to the jasmine of Ind to perfume the air; where the strong arm of the British law had disarmed the once warlike rajpoot, who had been forced to give his sword to the service of agriculture; where the graceful rajpootanee still bore with figure erect, on her well-formed head, thrown back, her water-jar from the village fountain. But with what startling danger the cool sweet draught is taken from that mountain spring! There a monstrous royal tiger

was wont to crouch and watch its human prey, and many a delicate damsel and many a dusky youth had this scourge of the village carried off with deafening roar to his den. Then to mark the faint blush that mounted into Miriam's cheek as she described how this stranger with his rifle in hand had laid wait for him. Now the tiger heedlessly advanced, step by step, till within twenty paces, when the sharp ring of the rifle made him drop on one shoulder, but only for an instant, for on seeing his enemy, with a loud roar that echoed through the hills, down on him he charged. One more such bound and the seemingly unequal contest is closed, but out peals again the second barrel of the rifle, "thud" goes the messenger through the tiger's brawny neck, he rears on end, he reels for a second on one hind paw, he's down, and then with a shout of triumph, but with dangerously heedless haste, the hunter rushes in and dashes his long keen hunting-knife to the monster's heart.

Then the enthusiastic girl would describe in words more touching than our language or usage will admit, how all the peaceful villagers met and deeply thanked the young hunter, who after showing them their old enemy lying with the blood flowing from his nostrils, stiffening on the cold dewy grass, led the way to the

cave on the mountain side, the den of the tiger; and here—oh! saddest scene of all, midst heaps of whitening bones, tattered rags, and tangled locks of long hair still clinging to cold staring skulls, a mother recognised by the silver bangles on the small ankles and wrists, her only daughter, the pride of her family, the flower of the village, who had been betrothed but a few days before the fearful curse of that sweet valley had snatched her away. Then loud rose the wail of the Hindoo women's mourning as they bore away the remains of their relations to the village funeral pyre. And as this long story was related, I experienced again with fresh zest all the boyish pride I felt after my first exploit at tiger-hunting in Central India.

I had known several Jews in the far East, of whom I could speak to the visitors, and regarding whom they had a thousand questions to ask. The conversation often turned on the prophecies in the Old Testament regarding the "Ibin Israel," but Jews generally prefer the Talmud, written by their rabbis at different times. It buoys up their constant and fervent expectation that the Messiah is yet to come, when he will collect all the tribes from the different corners of the earth around the city of Zion.

I often accompanied my friends to the synagogue,

and they began to look upon me as one of themselves. There are two principal synagogues at Jerusalem, with schools attached. The inside is a plain room with rows of forms and seats. There are galleries for the women, who are separated from the men; in some instances they had also a curtain or perdah in front of them. About the centre of the room or hall there is a raised platform or pulpit, on which sit the rabbis and elders. One of the rabbis usually commences the service by giving out a psalm, and every one, sitting, commences repeating or reading it out, some loud, some low, but all with a sing-song intonation, without attempt to keep time or even place. Many appear to try how fast they can read it, and some finish five or ten minutes before others. After this the rabbi repeats the Commandments, which are written on a board in Hebrew, and fixed on the wall at one end of the hall. All standing, face this tablet and repeat after the rabbi; then a hymn or psalm is sung, and the service is finished by the rabbi reading from the Talmud or one of the Prophets, and giving an extempore exhortation thereon. The congregation then saunter out.

The greater number of the Jews at Jerusalem are very idle: they have no employment, and subsist on charity. Many, indeed, are old and unfit for work,

having crawled there to die, but others are young and strong. The Jews all over the world send subscriptions for the support of the poor of the Holy City, which, though doubtless well intentioned, is probably the cause of much idle destitution.

The Jews of Jerusalem, having come together from many different countries, speak of course as many languages. Spanish is the most common, and next, perhaps German or Polish; but all use Arabic, the language of Syria, for general communication. Only the learned speak Hebrew, and still fewer read it, beyond the Ten Commandments and perhaps a little of the Talmud. The Spanish Jews seem to have retained the greater part of the Eastern costume, which is much more prepossessing in appearance than the greasy furs of Russia and Poland, or the black hat and very long black tightly-buttoned coat of the Germans. The Syrian Jews, in their thoroughly Eastern dress, have the most pleasing aspect.

One morning, after a residence of about fifteen days in Jerusalem, Miriam and Esther informed me that they had been invited to the wedding of one of their young friends, and asked if I would like to accompany them? Of course, I would be delighted to witness a Jewish wedding in their own city, and

also to have so good an opportunity of seeing the inhabitants. A marriage garment did not form any portion of my limited wardrobe, contained in a couple of saddle-bags; but, with the loan of a white Cashmere shawl for a turban, out of Joseph's store, and the purchase of a white silk flowing ubâee, well scented with sandal and attar of roses by the young ladies, I was declared by them not only presentable, but sure to be well received. About three in the afternoon we set out; Ibrahim leading the way, followed by Joseph and myself, while the ladies brought up the rear, in Eastern fashion. Here the Jewish women are obliged to follow the Mahomedan custom of enveloping themselves completely in a full white sheet, with a thick veil, usually a cotton handkerchief, covering the face. Whenever they appear in the streets, the face is much more completely concealed at Jerusalem and Damascus than at Constantinople or Cairo. The muslin veil or head-piece of Constantinople is rather coquettish than otherwise; but here a husband cannot recognise his wife, nor a brother his sister in the streets. It is whispered that the ladies take advantage of this every-day domino.

We were soon made aware of our proximity to the house in which the guests were collecting, by the

shrill screaming of the women reverberating through the street. It is an ancient usage, common to all sects in Syria, with the exception of the Mahomedans, and is supposed to be a laudation of the beauty and accomplishments of the bride. We were received by the family of the bride at the door, conducted through the usual court, and into a large room where the bride, bridegroom, and all the principal guests (the ladies now unveiled) were sitting round the divan; while prettily-dressed children romped about, or formed picturesque groups on the carpet. Men and women chatted and laughed, very different from the staid, solemn assembly of Moslems, under whatever circumstances they meet.

The customary salam all round having been performed, and our seats duly taken, the bride, accompanied by two damsels, approached, and first took Joseph's hand, touched her forehead with the back of it, and then put it to her lips. After a moment's hesitation, and with a little timidity, she awarded me a like courtesy; but Ibrahim and the young ladies were only treated to a slight obeisance. She was Spanish by birth, young and prepossessing in appearance, without being very handsome; she had that morning undergone the matronizing clipping or rather shaving of the hair from the forehead and

temples, and had donned the married woman's turban—a usage incumbent upon Jewish ladies on entering the estate of matrimony. It is, as may be supposed, anything but becoming; probably the origin of the custom had for its object that effect. The bridegroom was dressed in all the colours of the rainbow, and looked as if he did not exactly know where to put himself. Though very much older than the bride, he was not nearly so composed and self-confident.

But now the rabbi and scribes had arrived; and while the civil contract was being drawn out, I had an opportunity to look round. The proverbial beauty of the Jewess was scarcely borne out by the company assembled, the general cast of feature was more handsome than pretty; the very young were generally good-looking, but they seemed to fade, like all Asiatic races, at an early age; and this, perhaps, was rendered more remarkable by the strongly marked features of the race. On seeing an elder of the synagogue, whose acquaintance I had formerly made, I asked Ibrahim to make room for him near me on the divan; and when he had crossed the room and sat down, I requested information regarding the ceremony now going on, the legal portion of which appeared to be very

simple. The bridegroom made presents to the bride's parents, and, if in circumstances to afford it, gave her a dower; but the ordinary custom was to give her a written agreement to pay her a certain sum in the event of his divorcing her; a very usual amount among the poorer classes being forty Spanish dollars. The law of divorce seemed to be very unfair to the lady, incompatibility of temper being held a sufficient cause, though she could not thus get rid of a bad-tempered husband; and what must be still more trying to her, an angry word, or abusive epithet, would enable the husband to deduct ten dollars from the specified sum in agreement given on marriage; a second offence, one-half; and on the occurrence of a third offence, the unfortunate wife would forfeit the whole, and be liable to be divorced at her husband's pleasure, on his complaint before the head of the synagogue. I thought this must be an abuse of the old law, and expressed my feeling that there must be many marriages thus dissolved. "No," said my informant, "not so very many; for it is an expensive affair to get married,—the fees, the presents, the feast given to all friends and acquaintances, always absorb a large portion of the property of the bridegroom or his parents."

But now the ceremony we had come to witness

was near completion, and it was certainly not a very intricate affair. After the contract had been signed by all concerned, the rabbi joined the hands of the bride and bridegroom and blessed them. Coffee, sweetmeats, and sherbet were then handed to all, and the guests began to disperse, being first invited to a dance in the evening—not a professional dance, but one in which the bride herself and all the guests were to join. Now again the old women set up that peculiar tremulous marriage-cry common to Syria and many parts of the East, caused apparently by the tongue reverberating on the roof of the mouth, while the breath is forcibly expelled.

The lady-like affability of the Jewish women is here most marked, and the men are generally polite, civil, and intelligent; indeed, I had every reason to be pleased with the people amongst whom fortune had thrown me. After dark we returned to the wedding-party. The house was now gaily lighted with lamps, and filled with well-dressed guests; black eyes vied in sparkling lustre with the sheen of diamonds; iced sherbets and delicious moyah zubeeb (raisin water) flowed in abundance amongst as merry a little party as I ever witnessed. All were seated on the divan round the room, and the dancing commenced. There were no dancing-girls,

common to such entertainments in the East, no professional musicians even. Here was something quite new. Two of the guests produced violins, and a third a lute; and, sitting together on the divan, played a slow measure, to which the guests danced. A matron first led out two of the youngest of the guests, a couple of little girls, to the centre of the room, where they danced, keeping good time with the hands and arms as well as the feet; indeed, here, as in the East generally, and in Spain, the whole body takes its equal share in the dance, and keeps time with the music. When the two little maids were tired, they seized hold of two boys, and leading them into the centre of the room, left them there to dance, —dance they must, or stand, gape, and be laughed at. They soon broke into a quick, but not ungraceful measure; and when the company seemed to give a tacit consent to the close of their performance, they in their turn walked round the room to choose ladies. One led little Esther out, who acquitted herself *à merveille*, and the other insisted on bringing out a grown-up young lady. And now the real fun and excitement of the dance became apparent; no one was exempt from the ordeal. Young or old, all must come out and add to the amusement when called. No excuse of "can't dance" was allowed.

The luckless individual, whose *mauvaise honte* seemed to take the breath away, was forced out into the middle of the room, there to stand and be laughed at till the encouraging shouts of friends and the scraping of the fiddles induced the performance of a step or two that the good nature of the mistress of the ceremonies allowed to pass muster. But now Miriam and another young lady of about her own age and height are dancing most gracefully; the whole company are still; the audience *listen* to the dancing as well as gaze, as one may witness in the south of Europe when a favourite dancer is performing, and one's thoughts wandered back to the description of Jewish maidens coming out with their timbrels and harps to bring a hero home, or to dance on Jordan's willowed banks. But this couple have also finished, they consult for a moment together, and an observer may detect wicked fun sparkling in those eyes. They fix upon a tall, awkward-looking man, and lead him out; so much against his will, they have almost to use force. His lugubrious visage, with a wretched attempt at a smile, a dog-wagging-his-tail-when-about-to-be-beat look; his black beard hanging down to his waist, over a very badly fitting yellow and blue striped dress, were altogether so ludicrous, that as he slowly commenced raising a

foot on one side and hand on the other, the audience burst into shouts of laughter, which increased into the merriest peals, as his partner, a very fat little man, danced round him with wonderful agility, which increased in speed, and became more and more grotesque as the music grew faster, and the company shouted approval, till it must have been a difficult problem to solve who was the most tired—the dancers or the laughers.

After this, two matrons went up to the bride, who sat with her husband on the divan. She rose at once, walked round the room, and thanked some of the principal guests for their attendance, receiving a few words of courtesy from each in return. She was then left alone in the centre; the music commenced a slow, monotonous air, to which she kept time with much grace, passing gradually round the room and dancing to or before each principal guest, after which she resumed her seat. Two married women now pounced upon the bridegroom; he endeavoured to escape, but out he was pulled into the centre in front of the bride, and was not allowed to resume his seat till he had made an awkward attempt at a *pas de seul;* soon after which, one of the most agreeable assemblies at which the traveller can be present in the East broke up, and every one, with

his or her little paper lantern in hand, returned home.

Before closing this description of a Jewish marriage feast, I would remark that the music, for Asiatic music, was very good. Some of the airs are very ancient, and amongst those I instantly recognized one of the most common, but perhaps most pretty, and certainly the greatest favourite in India, "Tazee be Tazee." The Jews are the principal musicians at all Mahomedan entertainments throughout the towns of Syria.

As this chapter is especially intended to illustrate Jewish manners and customs in their own land, I will here add a short account of the festival of the Passover, at which I was present in Jerusalem—a festival which few Christians, perhaps, have witnessed. About an hour before sunset, on the 14th day of the Jewish first month of the year, I accompanied Joseph and all his family to the synagogue, which, with the exception of every one being in his or her best attire, bore its usual appearance. I was invited to take a seat among the elders in the centre platform, from which one could see and hear all that took place; and certainly the early and peculiar institution of the rite, and the solemn and strictly conscientious manner in which it is kept, made it

one of the most interesting scenes of a religious nature that could be witnessed. First, certain psalms were given out by the rabbi, and repeated aloud by all present. Then a hymn for the coming of the Messiah was sung, and all repeated the Commandments aloud, facing two tablets on which they were recorded, or rather the first clause of each Commandment, with its numbers in Hebrew. This was followed by an exhortation from the rabbi, and the service, the whole of which was in Hebrew, closed with the repetition of another psalm. On returning home, we found a few of the host's most intimate friends collected. A lamb had been killed during the day, but not with the ceremonies laid down in the Levitical law, which enjoins sprinkling the door-posts with the blood. The sacrifice of the lamb is not now observed, excepting at Samaria; and with many families who cannot afford to kill a lamb, a knuckle-bone, sticking out of a dishful of salad and herbs, does duty for it. Joseph's feast consisted of the roasted lamb, with an enormous salad of endive and various bitter uncooked herbs and unleavened bread; nor was the Syrian wine by any means forbidden. Both men and women sat down and ate in their out-door dresses. After every one was satisfied, six passages from Scripture were

read, having reference to the miracles done in Egypt and the flight of Israel from bondage; four cups of wine were drunk at intervals; and wine was mixed with water, to typify the Nile being turned into blood by Moses, with several such forms of probably modern origin.

On this day of every year the house is thoroughly washed out, and the walls of the room generally whitewashed, with the alleged object of removing every morsel of leaven that may have been left about. The ordinance of eating unleavened bread for seven days is most carefully and strictly kept; the letter of the law, I fear, being but too often observed without the spirit of it.

CHAPTER XI.

THE VALLEY OF THE JORDAN.

The Arab Sheik—Purchase of a Horse—Ride to Bethlehem—Rachel's Tomb—Aspect of the Town; its Christian Population—Children of the Crusaders—Distant View of Moab—Excursion to Bethel—Petra—Scopus—The Cave of Adullam—The Frank Mountain — Remarkable Cavern — Preparing for a Journey—Arab Encampment—The Spring of Elisha—Unknown Ruins—Pleasant Bivouac—Supposed Site of Jericho—Abundance of Wild-flowers—Banks of the Jordan—Opposite Pisgah—Description of the River—A Swim across the Stream—Ramble beyond Jordan—Narrow Escape—Ride to the Dead Sea—Desolation of the Scene—The Buried Cities—Buoyancy of the Water—Parting View of the Lake Scenery—Rencontre in the Wilderness—Visit to Bethlehem—Monastery—Chapel of the Nativity—Pools of Solomon.

After the marriage *fête* described in the preceding chapter, I made acquaintance with the Arab sheik of the Jordan, who was very willing to sell me a horse, but, with the usual tediousness of Eastern bargain-making, began to argue where the horses were to be shown and the sale to take place. The sheik would not bring his cattle within the power of the Turkish government; and Ibrahim, on our part, declared in confidence that we should be robbed, if not mur-

dered, if we went with our money to the valley of the Jordan. True enough, on inquiry, I found that no traveller ever visited the Jordan either without a strong guard from the Turkish pasha, or paying black mail to the sheik. English travellers pay the tax (about a hundred piastres for each person) through their consul's office!—not a very dignified proceeding. At last, an agreement having been arrived at as to the place of meeting, some short distance outside of the city walls, on the road to the Jordan, the sheik brought some good horses, and I purchased an excellent little Arab for one thousand piastres (about 10*l.*) It was a horse that would have sold for about five hundred rupees in most of the cities of Hindostan. The sheik also agreed to send his son and another mounted Arab for our protection while visiting the Jordan and Dead Sea.

My first ride was to the beautiful village of Bethlehem—a visit most pilgrims will frequently repeat. It is situated not more than three miles and a half from Jerusalem. Passing out by the Joppa gate, we rode nearly due south along a footpath marked out by the passage of men, sheep and camels, for ages. Like all the land round Zion, it is here rough and very stony, but fertile, notwithstanding. The green wheat, looking strong, thick, and healthy, lay on either side

as we rode along. It had sprung up about a cubit high between the flint stones that seemed to form the upper crust of the earth; and here and there, on the peaceful hill-side, flocks of sheep followed their shepherds over pasturage scented with thousands of gay wild-flowers.

The first large building on the rising ground to the left is the Greek convent of Elias. Here, by the road-side, is a very ancient well, a draught of whose cool, delicious water will more than repay the thirsty wayfarer for the trouble of drawing it. Not far beyond this, in a lone, quiet spot, solitary and comfortless, without a tree to shelter it, or anything to lead the thoughts of the pilgrim from the cold grave, is the tomb of the mother of Israel,—the beautiful, the well-loved, and faithful Rachel. This small stone building, with solid plastered dome, must surely mark the spot referred to in the record: "And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave, that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day:" and in the words of Jacob, "Rachel died by me, in the way to Bethlehem, and I buried her there." Since then the spot has been sacred to all tribes and nations, visited and prayed at without intermission by the Jew, Christian, and Mahomedan. No man can point out the tomb of the great conqueror Sesostris. The graves of

Solomon and the Queen of Sheba have long since been forgotten; but the *memory* of the devoted wife of high domestic virtues, though ages and ages have passed, is still venerated in the grave of Rachel.

But now the traveller approaches Bethlehem, the village in which our Saviour was born! Sit down with me, kind reader, on this green bank over against the pretty little town, and gaze at the broad landscape before you. Bethlehem consists of about three hundred substantial, well-built stone houses, flat-roofed, with here and there a dome; and white and clean they look, shining out from amongst the dark foliage of the olive trees. The village crowns a picturesque hill, terraced to the foot, producing vines, figs, and almonds in great luxuriance; and is inhabited entirely by Christians—a fair and handsome race, very different in appearance from their neighbours. They are evidently the children of the Crusaders. A freedom-loving, untamed race they still are, and give the Turkish Government much trouble.

In the valley below, the wheat looks green and promising. Here and there a wine-press tower commands a little vineyard; while in the background of the picture we see the mountains of Moab, bold and blue, in the far distance—the country of Ruth,

the gentle Moabitess. The scene recalls to mind that perhaps most beautiful anecdote in the whole book, Ruth's constancy to Naomi. There, in the broad valley, lying at our feet, *must* be the fields of Boaz, where the virtuous girl gleaned, who had left her own house and country at the call of pure love, saying to her mother-in-law, "Whither thou goest I will go. Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."

I made several short excursions; first to Bethel, where Jacob rested, and saw in his dream a ladder reaching from heaven, with angels thereon ascending and descending; to Petra, also, the abode of the Amalekites; to Scopus, where Titus first encamped when he marched on Jerusalem; to the cave of Adullam, in the wilderness of Engeddi, where David cut off the skirts of Saul's garment, and suffered him to depart unhurt (here the subterranean corridors form such a labyrinth of grottos that one might well lose himself for ever in it); to Ibel el Fureidis, or the Frank Mountain, where the Crusaders made their final but fatal stand. Here no quarter was asked or given; every brave soldier of the Cross tried to sell his life as dearly as possible. I also visited a very extraordinary subterraneous cavern under a portion of the city, the entry to which is

from the outside of the city wall; but this adventure deserves a more particular description.

This visit could only be attempted on a Friday, when all the gates are closed and the Turkish guard are at the mosque. My companions and I with some difficulty then forced an entry through a small hole under the city wall; it was just large enough for a man lying flat on his chest to squeeze himself through, but, when once inside, we stood up in a spacious, lofty hall, with ceiling, walls, and flooring all of hard limestone rock; and as one walked on, here and there, the passage partially narrowed, and then opened out again wider than ever, till, with the light of several torches and candles, we could not see from one side to the other. About the centre there is a fountain of fresh water, slightly impregnated with lime. This cave is evidently very ancient, yet it is unknown both to the government and to the citizens, and was found out by the English missionaries there, accidentally from a dog having followed a jackal in through the hole under the wall. It is well calculated for, and has probably been often used in former days as a hiding-place for persecuted races. Rude crosses on the walls tell of early Christians having sought refuge there. From the marks of the chisel on the walls, and the stones, partly hewn, lying

on the floor, it appears to have been originally quarried out for building purposes; and, from a careful examination of one place, we doubted not that we had found the original opening or first excavation from above, a long way inside the city. The formation of the rock being calcareous, the dripping from above had, by decomposition, greatly assisted the early miner, and has formed a few small stalactites, which hang from various parts of the roofs and walls.

I and my former companion now commenced preparations for a more distant tour from Jerusalem, and without difficulty procured the very few necessaries required or cared for by us, consisting of a very small gipsy tent, a blaze pot, a coffee pot, a small bag of rice, and another of flour, the whole carried easily on one mule: and Ibrahim, who offered to follow me, was mounted on a second, with the pack-saddles. We met, as agreed, the son of the sheik before mentioned, who with one of his followers was well mounted; and thus attended, rode out by St. Stephen's gate, one lovely morning in the beginning of April. We crossed the Kedron and valley of Jehoshaphat, wound round the foot of Mount Olivet, passed through the village of Bethany, and along a narrow, rough path, winding through many a small ravine, with wild hilly scenery on either side,

and having a rapid descent towards the plain of Jericho. By the fountain of the Apostles, under a rude ancient arch, we made a brief halt to take a cool, sweet draught; for the sun was hot in these narrow valleys, and the path toilsome and difficult, even to such climbers as Syrian horses. In about five hours we reached the plain, where our attention was attracted to the black tents, or, more properly speaking, coarse blankets stretched on slight poles, of the desert Arabs.

The encampment proved to belong to the same tribe as those with us, and as we rode forward we were met by the sheik of whom I had purchased my horse, and most hospitably invited not only to partake of refreshments, but to pass the night. Our wish, however, was to go on further, to the Spring of Elisha, at which place in about half an hour we arrived, under the guidance of nearly a third of the tribe. This, indeed, is a beautiful spot, and there is no good reason to disbelieve the tradition that it is the scene of Elisha's miracle. There is no known fountain near it. A great volume of water, clear as crystal, gushes out of the hill-side, diffusing fertility and verdure over the plain as far as the eye can reach. It is the diamond of the desert, so admirably described in one of Sir Walter Scott's works, where

the Scottish knight and the Saracen emir rested together after their encounter.

Not far from this spring, on the rise of a hill, are extensive ruins, with aqueducts, arches, and vaults, amidst tangled brushwood and thorns, inhabited by flocks of blue pigeons. They evidently are the remains of a well-built, opulent town; but how long ago, or who were the inhabitants, or to what race did the builders belong, not a soul can say. It is difficult to understand so much apparent civilization, such splendid buildings, where now all is a wilderness. On the most lofty ruins we sat down and enjoyed a wild, unusual, and very striking scene. Before us was the site of Jericho, the Jordan, and the Dead Sea, with the wild bare mountains beyond Jordan, and behind us the hill called the Mount of Temptation: the whole picture deeply tinged by the setting sun.

It was growing dark when we returned to the chosen bivouac, which we found looking very inviting; a bright little fire blazing at the tent doorway, and a savoury smell issuing from the gipsy pot hanging over it, while an Arab toasted a damper of unleavened flour over the hot ashes—not untempting food to us, who possessed an unlimited amount of Spartan sauce. The following morning, at earliest dawn, we were on foot, and bathed in the cool water

rushing from the lips of the fountain, while the Arabs struck the tent and Ibrahim prepared a cup of coffee.

Soon we were once more *en route*, riding across the rich though uncultivated valley of the Jordan, by the Arab village of Richo, which has been for ages fixed upon as the site of Jericho. Though it was yet early in the season, we began to feel the sun very powerful; but as yet the plain was verdant, still watered by the spring, now miles behind us. We frequently dismounted to gather and admire the immense variety of beautiful wild-flowers that literally covered the soil: the mignionette and lavender scented the atmosphere, leading the traveller's memory back to the home of early youth, left long—long ago; calling up before the imagination, already excited by the surrounding scenery, vividly as in a magic mirror, faces and scenes that had passed years and years ago from this world. What sense is so powerful as smell to lead the mind back to the associations of days that would probably otherwise never have returned from oblivion?

We had now arrived at the banks of the Jordan, just beyond which lay the hills of Nebo, Peor, and Pisgah, where Moses died and was buried, and from whence the Israelites first beheld the Promised Land.

This is the spot where pilgrims by thousands come annually to bathe at Easter. It must have been within sight of this place that the waters of Jordan were miraculously divided, and Joshua, with the ark and whole host of Israel, passed over on dry ground, and compassed the city that stood on the plain we had just passed, when, as their trumpets sounded, the strong walls crumbled to their foundation at the will of the Lord. But the river itself. Every Christian, perhaps, who has not reached it, has pictured in his inward thoughts an ideal Jordan, probably not one correctly. It is a peculiar but not a picturesque stream. It is as nearly as possible forty yards wide at this point, which is, perhaps, three miles or rather more from the Dead Sea. The water is deep, and flows rapidly, with a muddy stream. The bank is low, but steep, with deep water under it. At the pilgrim's bathing-place alone it shelves, but abruptly. The banks are thickly covered with oleander, brushwood, and tall reeds. It is here a most dangerous river to bathe in for those that are not strong swimmers, and many a pilgrim is drowned. The banks are much undermined with the water, and most difficult to climb up, and the water running as if through a sluice, would prevent any one holding on long by a projecting willow.

My companion and I had a desire to cross to the land beyond Jordan; and having fixed upon the easiest looking landing-place on the opposite shore, walked a hundred yards above it, and even then had to strike out manfully to make it. We took a short ramble amongst the brushwood on the opposite bank, much against the wish of our Arab guides, who sat on a tamarisk tree, with their muskets in rest, energetically waving us to come back. They had a quarrel, handed down from many generations, with the Arabs on the opposite shore, who are quite independent, and have from all accounts a deservedly bad character. Returning, we took it easily down stream, intending to make the shelving bank at the bathing-place; but with such precipitous fury did the stream run, that when I came abreast of it, I failed to get a footing, and was carried down the stream, swept along under the boughs of tamarisks and willows, wheeled round and round in a diminutive whirlpool, and at last, fatigued and out of breath, scrambled up the bank with some difficulty.

Ibrahim had by this time prepared a light *dejeûner* of quail and fruit, the produce of the valley; and after a few whiffs of the camp chibouk, we saddled up, mounted, and rode for the Dead Sea. We soon left the green bushes of the Jordan, and entered on

a burning hot arid plain. Here the attention of every traveller must be instantly arrested by that most singular fruit, the apple of Sodom, described by every one who has written of this country from Josephus downwards, and perhaps the Jewish historian gives the best account of it. The fruit with its bright yellow and rosy colour, its rich plum-like appearance, is most inviting to the parched, thirsty throat of the wayfarer; but when with eager grasp he clutches it, the talisman is dissolved: but smoke and ashes arise from his trembling hand.

The smooth, leaden-looking water of the Dead Sea was without a ripple on it to break the fierce glare of the reflected sun, and not a vestige of vegetation remained to cheer the eye. The surface of the light-coloured sand is liberally encrusted with sulphur and salt. The effluvia and noxious vapours arising from wet hollows in the plain, together with the blazing heat of the noon-day sun, are anything but agreeable. One cannot wonder that the malaria and pestiferous exhalations cause the perfection of sterility and the death-like solitude around. Though our weary eyes wandered over the scene, not a bird, not an insect could we see or hear, not a wavelet on the beach broke the solemn silence, not even an atom of seaweed, nor any description of marine plant had

been washed up by former storms. These waters form the only part of the whole world where neither animal nor vegetable life exists. Strange lake or sea, well named of death, and nearest the centre of the globe by some thirteen hundred feet, what have thy waters engulphed? The fruitful vale of Siddim, the populous towns of Sodom and Gomorrah, the scene of the Almighty's awful anger and just retribution! Here, we may well believe, Admah, Zeboim, and Zoar, lie buried; and here it was that the highly-favoured Abraham and Lot received the visits of angels. But all has now passed away, and left but a warning witness of the probable fate of this too-much-loved world!

After what has been written about the great buoyancy of the water, we could not but try it, although we had had bathing enough for one day; and the power of the sun, greater than I have felt it on the equator, made it hazardous. However, my clothing was but light, and throwing my ubâee over the branches of a stranded whitened tree, so as to make a temporary shade, I was in a minute undressed and floundering on the surface of the water, which certainly has extraordinary power, brought forcibly to the notice of the bather by his feet suddenly leaving the bottom before the water has

reached his chest, which probably gives him a most detestable mouthful. The great buoyancy of the water is doubtless occasioned by its vast specific gravity, arising from the large quantity of salt, probably of different kinds, held in solution in it. The water is shallow, but very clear. When swimming, we could see the bottom; we, however, soon landed, and quickly dressed, feeling refreshed, though the salt and sulphur made our eyes and nostrils smart for several hours. This sea is from eight to ten miles broad, so that the mountains on the opposite shore are distinctly seen, though the water to the south bounds the horizon.

For two or three hours longer we toiled on through the heavy burning sand, endeavouring to satiate the strong curiosity that every one must feel in this spot of the globe, when the declining sun warned us to depart in search of a more suitable encampment. We mounted the hills, with our faces westward; and after about an hour's severe labour reached the summit, and there turned round and looked back on a scene that must ever remain deeply engraven on the memory. All round are wild desolate mountains, heaved up in volcanic masses by some awful convulsion of nature, distorted, blackened heaps, that seem to hold in their

iron grasp a lake of fire, for the hue of the water was of the brightest purple with the rays of the setting sun, while above it hung a dark shadowy mist. One distant spot alone, where the silver tide of the Jordan could be seen meandering through its green valley, looked like hope at the close of a dark, care-worn life. We wandered on another mile or two, weary and worn, through the darkness, before we found water and provender for the cattle; and then, wrapping ourselves in our blankets, and careless of all around, we slept soundly till the breaking dawn roused us refreshed and eager for the scenes of the coming day.

After an hour to recruit the inward man and get the horses together, we saddled up, and proceeded nearly due west, except where the inequalities of the difficult path caused us to diverge. In about three hours, the guides came to a dead halt, and refused to go further. They had come, they declared, to the boundary of their territory. They would, if we pleased, take us back to Jerusalem, but dared not encroach on the ground of another tribe. Our direct route lay over the high country to Bethlehem, and we cared little for a guide, and required no protection. A pocket compass and an excellent map had not a little surprised the Arabs with our apparent

perfect knowledge of the country and bearings of different places. But to induce the muleteers to come on alone was much more difficult than finding one's way over an open country with no greater obstructions than a steep hill or a deep ravine. At last we combated their fears of robbers ahead by reminding them that they would be as badly off if we remained where we were, for the Arab guides had by this time departed. We again proceeded, therefore, and had gone perhaps a couple of miles, when their terror was brought to the highest pitch by the appearance of two armed and mounted Arabs on our left, who kept gradually approaching and watching us, till, when within two hundred yards, I struck spurs into my horse's flanks, and dashed full tilt up to them, rifle in rest, and pulling up sharp close to their horses' heads, *à la* Bashi Bazook, demanded their route and business. When dealing with an Arab, like most Asiatics, if you do not bully him, he is certain to bully you: if you do not at once assert the position of master, you must be prepared to take that of slave. They were apparently taken aback, and admitted that their road differed from ours. After the exchange of a few words, such as—

"We are the owners of the land."

"*Perhaps.* But the one Allah made the wilderness a high road for all."

"Where do you travel?"

"To the west. And you?"

"To the east."

"Peace be with you!"

"Peace." And we separated.

On returning to my party, we soon found that the vision of the two Arabs acted as a capital spur to the mules, and in two hours more we were in sight of Bethlehem. Here the land appeared rich and productive; every hill bore the traces of ancient terracing; it had all the appearance of having been once under careful cultivation, and doubtless would amply reward the peasant's labours. When, however, you ask why it is not tilled, there is always the same answer: "The sons of Ishmael have still their hand against every man's hand; they are always in the vicinity, ready to swoop down, and reap that which they have not sown."

At Bethlehem we encamped and visited the very large monastery, much more like an ancient fortress than a convent, evidencing the great insecurity of life and property. The entrance is through an opening so small, that one has almost to crawl through it, and it is closed with a portcullis of stone. Within is the

Chapel of the Nativity, which the monks believe to be on the site of the stable where our Saviour was born.

Early the following morning we rode on, and came to the Pools of Solomon. Josephus and other early writers seem to have put it beyond a doubt, that these celebrated and magnificent public works are due to that great king. There are three stone tanks almost perfect to this day, and full of the clearest water. They lie one above another, rising up the slope of the hill, and average each over five hundred feet in length, by two hundred and fifty feet broad; and one is fifty feet deep, the others somewhat less. An aqueduct, many miles in length, winding along and round the spurs of the hills, so as to preserve nearly a level, still conducts water from them into Jerusalem. A square fortification, with a square tower at each corner, of a later date, commands the position.

CHAPTER XII.

HEBRON AND BEERSHEBA.

The Road from Bethlehem—Mud Villages—Arrival at Hebron; its high Antiquity—Biblical Associations—Finding a Lodging—Out at Day-dawn—A Day in the Wilderness—Looking for Water—Incident at Sunset—Encamped with the Arabs—Mixture of Race—Women of Abyssinia—Arrival at Beersheba—Wells of the Patriarchs; Evidences of their High Antiquity—A Noble Arab—Return to Jerusalem—Strolling in its Environs—A Ride to Bethlehem—Murillo's Virgin—Reflection on Art—Churches and Creeds at Jerusalem—The Protestant Bishopric—Valley of Artoss—Garden of Solomon—Ain Bateah—Beit Hanine—Christian Ceremonies in Jerusalem—Celebration of Good Friday—Artistic Effects—Mingled Nationalities—Farewell to the Holy City.

After visiting Bethlehem, we found ourselves travelling slowly over a narrow broken path, which has no pretensions to the name of a road, and yet is the highway between Hebron and Jerusalem. It runs parallel on the west to a range of mountains covered with brushwood, and through many a fertile little valley, watered by a clear fountain or mountain rill. We passed by two wretched little hamlets, "Ed Dirwah" and "El Khubil," where the houses were the worst I had seen in Palestine, constructed of mud and brushwood. At the latter, there are the remains

of some old castle, where probably in former days a chieftain levied black mail on the caravans passing to and from Egypt.

The sun touched the western horizon, and the evening breeze felt deliciously cool after the long day's exposure to his rays, when we reached David's first capital in Canaan, and perhaps the oldest town in the land. It was the city of the sons of Heth in the days of Abraham—Kirjath Arba—the same is Hebron to this day. Here Sarah, who had been his faithful wife for upwards of a hundred years, the companion of his wanderings, died; and here, in the cave of Machpelah, that he bought from Ephron, he laid her; and here he, with his son Isaac and his son Jacob, the fathers of the children of Israel, all sleep. The Mahomedans have built a mosque over the sepulchre, which, with its two minarets, is the principal building in the town. The houses are built of stone and mortar, flat-roofed and whitewashed, and accordingly, though irregular and rough, they are substantial.

We urged on our jaded cattle over the roughly-paved and narrow street till we reached the centre of the little town, and the now tired and surly muleteer asked where we intended to lodge. I had led on, looking right and left for a chance lodging, but with-

out success; every door was closed, and but few passengers were visible in the fast darkening streets. Ibrahim told us, that just beyond the town gate, on the other side, there was a quarantine built when Mahomed Ali reigned; though not now in use, a French or Italian doctor resided in it. "No," we said: "we are not now in the humour for anything civilized; if fate has nothing better in store than the street, let it be so: but there must be a 'khan,' where we will at least get food and shelter for the cattle." The muleteer did not know, but was full of evil forebodings, for the place has as bad a name now for robbery, murder, and rebellion, as it had in the days of Saul and Absalom. I was still stumbling on in front, when we were accosted with the welcome "salam" (peace). The word never sounded so sweetly in my ears, and looking round, I saw a little maid standing within the porch of a half-opened door. I answered, "Peace be unto you! where can a weary pilgrim lodge?" She called her mother, who looked frightened and suspicious at our dress and arms; but I had by this time dismounted, thrown my bridle to the muleteer, and entering the doorway, claimed her hospitality; besides which, as the surest way of getting into an old woman's good graces, I slipped into her hand a couple of medjeedies.

My worthy hostess, as she proved, directed Ibrahim where to find a "khan" for the horses, and bustled about with preparations for supper, to which all did good justice; and then the travelling chibouk was produced, filled, lighted, and handed round—for by this time the father and uncle of our first acquaintance in Hebron had joined the snug party round the fire. I put many questions regarding the town and surrounding country, but there was not much information to be gained. Strange enough, it was still as famous for its grapes as in ancient days, when the spies from the camp of the Israelites carried back with them immense bunches in proof of the fertility of the soil of the Promised Land. We, in turn, were of course questioned as to where we were going. On our answering Beersheba, or Beer-es-seba (literally, the Seven Wells), they looked at us suspiciously, shaking their heads: they did not believe us. "There is nothing there," they said, "but the old wells, and they belong to the Arabs of the wilderness; you cannot go there, no pilgrim ever visits the place." They had no information to give about the route, so we proposed to rest, and were conducted to a room near the roof of the house.

As soon as we were left alone, I walked round the quaint old place. The door was off its hinges, and

leaned against the sides of the aperture; the wooden shutters of the single window seemed to require but a gentle push to send them rattling into the street below. The lower corners overlapped, while the upper left a wide open gap, through which the stars looked down clear and bright. The room was large, being apparently the whole length and depth of the house, and round it was the usual eastern couch or divan, forming the only description of furniture in it; the cushions on it appeared to have been of some black stuff, once fringed with gold tinsel, but that once—*its* day of finery—must have been so very long ago, that it was hard to decide from its tattered remnants even what its original colour might have been. I collected some of the cushions in a corner, placed my arms by my side, and wondering what strange scenes these old stained walls had witnessed, soon fell asleep, and dreamt that I was on a visit to the king of the fleas.

With the first cool breath of early dawn I was awake, and soon found my way to the flat house-top, to look around upon the town and country, and enjoy the refreshing breeze blowing over my chest and forehead, heated by the midnight revels my courtly company had held on my blood. Standing there, I watched the scene that originated the poetical

idea in the mythology of the Vedas, that likens the dawn to a fair young virgin of rosy tint and sweetest breath, being hunted by the hot, impetuous sun, who, with ravishing thoughts intent, chases the health-giving, timid maid from her silver car. But, reflecting how little there was to detain me at Hebron, I very soon descended from this altitude, fastened my sash—took up my arms—threw my ubâee, that covered everything, over my shoulder, and saw that coffee was being prepared, while I walked to the khan to see after my horse, and give him an extra feed of barley. Barley is the grain given to cattle all through Asia Minor and Syria, though oats grow wild, and were probably first taken from this part of the world into Europe by the Crusaders. Here it is not now cultivated.

Shortly after sunrise our horses were saddled, but it is always a work of some difficulty to get a muleteer to start. At length, bidding adieu to our hosts, with good wishes and a promise to return after a visit to the wells of the patriarchs, we travelled on steadily along a rough pathway, without interference of any sort, till about 2 P.M., when we approached a few Arab huts, situated by a hollow with water in it, called Edh-Dhoheriyah, on the borders of the wilderness in its stern reality. Beyond this the Turkish

government does not even pretend to rule. The Arabs came out and surrounded our little party, but were perfectly civil—indeed, much more so than on any of the beaten tracks pursued by travellers. Ahmed, the sheik, said that Beersheba was not in his territory, and that he could not give us a guide; indeed, that we could not go any further. Expostulation was all in vain; so, rising from the bank on which we had sat, I mounted and rode on, but had hardly proceeded a step or two when the sheik called out, "Where are you going?"

I answered, quietly, "To Beersheba."

"Alone?"

"Yes."

"By Allah!" said the chief, "I'll go with you myself."

"Taeeb" (good), I answered.

And, true enough, he brought out his mare, remarking that the clan encamped in the wilderness were his friends, and that he would conduct us to their tents. Accordingly, after we had baited our horses, and refreshed ourselves on what would be generally considered rather poor fare, viz., a damper of barley-meal and camel's milk, we started afresh for the most southern point of Palestine. The season being spring, the large undulating plain we now

entered was by no means wanting in green grass and even wild-flowers, while patches of wild oats looked almost flourishing. The rocky hills of Judea were left behind, and the soil now travelled over was a light sand; no water was to be seen either in the shape of pool or stream.

We went on till sunset, when the cattle were almost exhausted. Ahmed had for some time been sending his men galloping across the plain right and left, to look for water to camp by, but without success. He was now at a nonplus. In the East there is but a very short twilight. Darkness fast approached, and the fears of the unfortunate muleteer, now joined by those of Ibrahim, found vent in low murmurs against me for bringing them into the pathless wilderness. Both horses and men were parched with thirst, for the day had been hot, and matters looked unpromising enough, when right in the centre of the last purple light that still trembled in the west, a man on horseback stood on the horizon. He appeared to have been watching us, though he could not see us then, for we were in the darkened east; but his outline and that of his horse, though very far off, stood out strangely clear and bold. Instantly the chief waved with his arm, and his men galloped into line; every firelock was primed, every

match was lighted, and every eye was fixed on the spectre-like horseman who stood motionless, when suddenly he disappeared as if he had dropped behind the horizon. A scene so strangely magical can only be witnessed on the wild open prairie. The sheik muttered an order, low and guttural, to one of his best-mounted young men, who dashed off at full gallop, while all the rest followed slowly and steadily. Shortly we met him returning with several horsemen, and in half an hour we were all in the camp of friendly Arabs.

These, in fact, were the tribe the sheik had expected to meet. They were residing here in the black tents, with all their flocks and herds. We pitched our little tent by the well of water, and soon had the gipsy-pot on a cheerful fire, before which, on the soft turf, we stretched our weary limbs. The following morning, as it was no use taking the mules on, and Ibrahim greatly preferred going back, Ahmed, my companion, and myself mounted and rode on towards Beersheba, while the others returned in the direction of Hebron. Our route for about four hours lay over a prairie, intersected here and there with dry water-courses, the soil sandy but at this season of the year covered with coarse grass. We met several Arabs belonging to the tribe we

had passed the night with, tending their flocks of sheep and herds of camels and horses.

We remarked amongst this tribe an unusual amount of African blood; many of their women appeared to be Abyssinian slaves. In most tribes in Syria one can see that the pure blood of the sons of Ishmael has been tainted by that of central Africa, and doubtless some tribes have greatly degenerated from their intercourse with the blackest and perhaps plainest race on the globe. This is the case particularly amongst the tribes nearest Egypt. What may be the ultimate effect upon the whole Arab race of this part of the world, from this admixture of a certainly lower race in the scale of the human family, seems well worthy of consideration.

As we proceeded down the Wadee, we came to pools of water in the deeper hollows of the water-courses, evidently used at this season for watering the cattle. On we rode till the sun was becoming powerful, when at last, after some searching, we reached the wells of the patriarchs, Beersheba, one of the extremities of the land of Canaan. The principal well is to all appearance very ancient; indeed, it may be of any conceivable age, for the sides are built with massive stones in the rough unhewn state, without mortar, and maintain their

position from their flat shape and great specific gravity. Several great stones on the brink of the well are worn nearly through and through by the chance friction of the string or rope used in drawing the water. There are also some large rough stone troughs around it, the bottoms of which are worn through to the soil by the water poured into them for ages past, for the flocks and herds to drink. With the assistance of a leathern cup and of our bridles, lengthened by a string, we drew some of the water, which was cool and sweet; and with a few dried dates and unleavened bread, made a frugal Arab repast; and, having hobbled our horses, let them loose to graze.

The grass grows here in patches in the valleys almost luxuriantly, but all over the wavey prairie not a tree, not a bush is to be seen. As my companion rested, I strolled about alone, examining the wells, and allowing the imagination to wander back to the people and scenes in connection with this spot, the place where great covenants and promises were entered into, as described in Holy Writ, till reminded by Ahmed that his village was a long way off. On this hint we shook off the lethargy so apt to overtake one after reaching the end of a toilsome journey; and having caught our horses and re-

saddled them, we turned towards Hebron, reaching Dhoheriyah, Ahmed's village, in the cool of the evening. The whole of the people had come out to meet and welcome us, and I hardly need say that we parted from Ahmed and his tribe with regret. He had proved himself one of the best type of Arab sheiks. He had his clan under perfect command, and had not been spoilt by coming in contact with European travellers. He appeared to be determined and brave, but respectful. Dark for a Syrian, he bore the usual type of a true Arab in his thin black beard and hawk-like eyes. In stature he was about five feet nine inches, active and strongly made. He showed himself to be a good shot, and used his jereed like a mountaineer of Lebanon. He rode a pretty light-brown mare, too short for great speed, but of the best make and size for endurance.

In two days we reached Jerusalem, lodging one night with our acquaintances at Hebron, who had expected us, and had, most hospitably, a capital supper ready, and their friends collected together. None of the party had ever been to Beersheba, and they were all anxious to hear about the old wells, and how we managed to make the journey. In return, they told us a great many traditions about the wells and the patriarchs, that one would vainly look

for in any book. Night was fast falling as we re-entered the holy city on a Saturday, and right gladly did we look forward to a day of peace and rest after so long a ride.

We now resided for about a month in Jerusalem, repeatedly visiting the places most attractive within ten miles round, and loitering through many a quiet, still evening, sometimes with Joseph's interesting family as companions, in the shade of the olive-trees of Gethsemane, and by the cool, trickling fountain that emptied itself into the Pool of Siloam, and, flowing from thence, wends its way through the luxuriant gardens that tradition assigns to King Solomon, and then loses itself in the brook Kedron. I also made some acquaintances amongst the inhabitants of Bethlehem, distant a short ride from Jerusalem, where the artist may find at least one good model for a virgin, as fair perhaps as Murillo's lovely girl enthroned on canvas in the Palazzo Pitti; but I saw none that approached that ideal beauty painted by Raphael, in the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, or by Titian, in the Accademia dell' belle Arti, in Venice. Who can forget the first impression on seeing the latter? that expression of sublime awe and wonder depicted in the Virgin's face ascending to heaven? *That* is the true school, which can delineate exquisite

repose, with perfect sense of expression in each line of beauty—strength without effort: *that* high art, which appeals to the imagination through the eye, and elevates the image formed in the mind, till one cannot wonder at poor human nature kneeling down in earnest prayer before a coloured yard or two of canvas!

Every creed has its representatives in Jerusalem. The Latin, Greek, and Armenian churches have very extensive monasteries and chapels gaily and expensively fitted up. We had the pleasure of seeing some of the Protestant mission in Jerusalem, and became acquainted with the Bishop, Dr. Gobat, appointed by the King of Prussia, who holds the right of nominating a bishop alternately with our Government. The bishop appeared to be peculiarly well suited for his high office and position as chief of the hardest working society of missionaries one may meet. Pure and unaffected, they are, above all things, perfectly free from cant. They, with their neat little Gothic chapel of white stone, situated on Mount Zion, in which may be heard the psalms of David sung in the language of their author, contrasted most pleasantly with the ostentatiously decked altars and gaudy pomp, procession, and show of the various other churches.

Among the many attractive rides near Jerusalem

which we enjoyed was a trip to the valley of Artoss, where Solomon had his *hortus conclusus*. It is a beautiful spot for a garden, surrounded by hills, and watered by a mountain stream that flows all the year round. Some converted Jews now reside on and cultivate it. I also went to Ain Bateah over a wild but beautiful country, and by Beit 'Hanine to Neby Samwil, an old tower or castle, from which there is a distant view across Judea to the Mediterranean.

Before leaving Jerusalem, my friends gave me an opportunity of attending at the celebration of the Passover, as described in a previous chapter. The following day was Good Friday, and we witnessed the ceremony of the Crucifixion in the church of the Holy Sepulchre, and afterwards the various processions and ceremonies held at Easter. But these have been so often described by visitors, that my readers may be spared the repetition of them. The greater part, indeed, particularly the "Holy Fire," can but be considered an indecent exhibition, though some scenes are infinitely more impressive than those one may witness on the like occasion in Saint Peter's at Rome. This was particularly the case during the night of Good Friday, where the great church was thronged to overflowing with pilgrims from every country in Christendom, each bearing a blazing torch

or candle, which fitfully lighted up the vast dome and vaulted chapels, and moving on in slow procession to the several shrines. They bore along with them a waxen figure of our Saviour on the cross, that painfully resembled reality; while, at each shrine, Franciscan monk or friar held forth in vehement and impassioned language in some twelve different tongues. Such a scene of bright light and dark shade, such contrasts were here as Gerard della Notte would have delighted to paint. The same torchlight played on the pale features of the Russian from the shores of the Baltic, and on the jet-black Nubian from the banks of the Nile. Here thronged turbaned heads, black beards, and dark-flowing robes in juxta-position with the red tarbush, braided jacket, white kilt, and scarlet greaves of the strutting Albanian. There, wild desert Arabs, in the shaggy burnouse, looked daggers at their old enemies the Turkish soldiers, who seemed to delight in paying off old scores under the cloak of keeping the peace. Pressing forward, there is a tall, austere Spanish priest; he with bright eager eye and deeply-excited expression is an Italian. Here are Maronites from their mountain home in Lebanon, in their very loose short trowsers, shoes and stockings, sash, gay waistcoat and jacket, hanging loose over one shoul-

der. Here also is the fat, sleek Armenian in garments of fine cloth, in nearly modern fashion. Here are monks, friars and priests of every degree. There is the Bethlehemite, looking fierce and quarrelsome in his black ubâee. Here the Greek caloyer, with his immense black beard and four-cornered cap; and there, standing aloof, disdainful of all, is the wealthy English traveller, in an old shooting-coat and shocking bad hat.

We had been now upwards of a month in Jerusalem, and though we could not leave it but with regret, still the feeling that constantly drives the wanderer onward began to present itself in various ways. We paid our last visit to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, when an old monk produced the sword and spurs of Godfrey de Bouillon, the successful Crusader and first Christian King of Jerusalem. A similar farewell visit to the shrines and places that had pleased us most and left the best impression, was now all that remained prior to my departure from Jerusalem.

CHAPTER XIII.

RETURN TO BEYROUT.

Leave-taking—The Route to Damascus—Tomb of the Kings—Last View of Jerusalem—Halt at Beereh—The Way to Bethel—Deficiency of Roads—Approach to Samaria—Polite Villagers—Jacob's Well—Agreeable Incident—Narrow Escape—Mount Gerizim—Ruined Temple—Bird's-eye View over Samaria—Peak of Mount Lebanon—Visit to the Samaritan Synagogue—Ancient Copy of the Pentateuch—Decline of the Samaritan Population—Their Greek Descent—Quarrel with the Tribe of Kess—Observance of Ancient Ceremonies—The Ruins of Sebaste—Traces of the Magnificence of Herod—Church of St. John the Baptist—Battle-field of Megiddo—Mount Tabor—Arrival at Nazareth—A Village Festival—The Virgin's Fountain—Watering the Cattle—Memories of Nazareth—The Sea of Galilee—Remains of Bethsaida and Capernaum—Clearness of the Lake—A Delicious Bathe—The Ancient Tiberias—A Learned Jew—Ancient Baths—Agreeable Fakeer—Route to Saped—Druse Village of Rameh—The Druse Women—Plains of Acre—Memories of the Crusaders—The Mediterranean at Kaiffee—Mount Carmel—St. Jean d'Acre—Hill of Cœur de Lion—Maronite Christians at Bussah—Road of Alexander the Great—Ruins of Tyre—Ancient Wells—A Country of Ruins—The Purple Dye of Tyre—Ruins of Sidon—Tradition of the Prophet Jonah—Ride to Beyrout—Its Antiquity—Prosperous Condition—Its numerous spoken Languages—Production of Silk—The Maronite Christians—Hotels and Cafés—Climate.

One soft balmy evening as we sat on the divan in my friend's house, peacefully enjoying the solemn quiet of the season, I mentioned that the hour of

departure had arrived. But leave-takings are better untold. It was sad to part with Miriam and Esther; and old Joseph, too, received a kindly and regretful farewell. As for Ibrahim, he was determined to go to Damascus with me, partly for company's sake, but also that he might transact a little business on his own account.

Two days afterwards, early in the morning, we rode out by the Damascus Gate, onward by the tomb of the kings, or more properly of Helena, Queen of Adiabene; for it is probably that mentioned by the Greek writer of the second century, Pausanias, as being particularly worthy of admiration. Its then famous stone doors have been torn from their hinges and lie in the dust at the elegantly carved portal of the sepulchre; while its gloomy chambers have been robbed and the ground strewed with fragments of beautifully sculptured sarcophagi. We rode on till we came to the last rise of Scopus, where Titus encamped with his legions; the last spot from which the Holy City is visible to those travelling northwards. Here, accordingly, I dismounted to take a farewell view, and sighed to think that my eye should never again wander over Mount Zion with its most ancient citadel, from which the Turkish flag now hung! never again rest on these dark moss-grown walls!

The dome of the Holy Sepulchre, and the Mosque of Omar, on its proud site over the ruins of the Temple of Solomon, glittered in the rays of the morning sun, as we rode on to Beereh, the Beeroth of Scripture, so named from its much-prized well of water. It is usually the first encamping ground on this route, though barely ten miles from Jerusalem; but the first march of a journey in the East is always a short one. After a few minutes' halt I rode on alone, leaving Ibrahim to follow with the mules, as I wished to hire cattle at Nablous without the interference of the muleteers from Jerusalem, who made unusual and exorbitant demands, and appeared inclined to become very troublesome.

In about an hour I entered on the fine pasturage tracts of Bethel, where Abraham once pitched his tents, and Jacob dreamed on his way to Haran. The country is hilly, and as deserted as it was in those days; not a human habitation was to be seen, and as to the road, there is never anything better than a sheep or goat track in Syria, for Mahomedans make no roads. On entering the region of Samaria the country opens out into wide, well-watered, and most fertile valleys, while the mountains on either hand, though rocky, were clothed with green brushwood. Here prettily situated villages were frequently

passed, looking tolerably rich and prosperous, though the armed shepherds and peasants showed the insecurity in which they lived; nor were their answers to the questions we put as to the route couched in over civil language. The reply was usually in the form of a demand to share in the contents of my purse, or for some part of my dress or arms; a refusal, however, particularly if something slightly derogatory to the speaker's origin was added in Turkish, caused no breach of the peace.

The day waned as, tired and thirsty, I reached a very deep old well, and sat down in the shade, having first taken the saddle off my good horse and let him ease himself with a roll on the grass, for he had carried his master about forty miles that day.

I had rested thus but a little while, when two young women approached the well with their jars and a string, and seeing them I lay still, hid from their sight, so as not to frighten them away. They advanced cautiously, talking about the loose horse, who being no less hot and thirsty than his master, had watched them with a bright and eager eye. When one had let her pitcher down the well, I requested a drink of water without rising from my recumbent position; the result was a slight scream, two steps in flight, and a hurried look round to see

that no one else was in sight, for those black eyes had no right to shine but under the shade of the "boorkha," which had been left behind. In a few moments the inclination to assist the lonely and friendless—a true woman's natural feeling—came to the relief of their custom-prescribed silence, and they drew water for me and my horse. From them I learnt that Nablous, which occupies the site of ancient Sychar of Samaria, was about a mile distant, and the well was that of which Dr. Robinson says, "I think we may rest with confidence in the opinion that it is *Jacob's well.*" Here, then, our Saviour met the woman of Samaria, who greatly marvelled that he should ask her, being a Samaritan, for water to drink; and to this day they have no dealings with the Jews. To her, and in this place, was made known that great truth of such mighty import, that passage of Scripture so much dwelt upon by all, that the Father is not alone to be worshipped in the mountain (close by, where now lie the ruins of a great temple), nor yet at Jerusalem, but "in spirit and in truth."

The women had gone, having first warned me of danger which I had not heeded, and I sauntered on, leading my horse and dreaming over the past, when suddenly my eye caught something crawling towards

me amongst the rocks. I stood, watched, and again saw a dark burnouse crouchingly approach to a stone nearer me. As I vaulted into my saddle, bang! went a musket, and the ball whistled over my head, and as I galloped up to the stone, three wild-looking black-bearded Arabs went bounding over the rocks up the steep hill, while I returned the salute with a random rifle-shot, by way of warning them to leave me to my meditations.

I rode into the town of Nablous about sunset, and found lodgings at the house of a respectable resident, who informed me that, shortly before, four American travellers had been attacked while visiting the well of the Patriarch; that their arms and clothes had been taken from them, and one run through the side or back with a spear, while their dragoman had been still more severely used; even practical Jonathan, while busily engaged in measuring the depth of the well, had been caught napping.

Early the following morning, I took a lad as a guide, and climbed Mount Gerizim, the Mount of Blessing; on the opposite side of the town stands Ebal, the Mount of Cursing. Here an hour or two were spent amongst the ruins of the Temple, where the Samaritans still annually sacrifice the Paschal Lamb—the only place now where the ancient rite is

observed. From this point a magnificent view is obtained of the well-built town, situated amidst groves of luxuriant vegetation, with a clear stream of water running through it, which always makes a little paradise in the East, where water is the only natural want. Farther down, the whole valley was one waving field of corn, while in the far distance, the blue Mediterranean was visible, and in the opposite direction I caught the first glimpse of Jebel Sheik, the highest peak of Mount Lebanon. It was now capped with snow, which softly blended with the light fleecy clouds of morning.

On descending from Mount Gerizim, we visited the synagogue of the Samaritans, and found the people assembled in the usual course. They afforded me a seat, and were very civil. The high priest, a fine old man, with a high receding turban like a Parsee's, was particularly obliging, and after a little pressing, showed us a very ancient manuscript copy of the Five Books of Moses, fixed in a circular metal case, and stated to be upwards of 3,400 years old, having been written by *Abishna*, the son of Phineas, the great-grandson of Aaron. It is generally admitted, even by the Jews, that the Samaritans have the most ancient copy extant, though they seldom, if ever, show it.

The Samaritans, as a people, I may here remark, are fast dying out; at present they number only some forty families at Nablous, and are unknown in any other part of the world, although they have an idea that there are some of their sect in India, sold by the Arabs centuries ago into captivity. The greater portion of the inhabitants of this town are descended from the Greek colony, and probably the name *Nablous* is derived from the Greek *Neapolis.* They are said to be the most turbulent and fierce race in Syria, always ready for a fight. It is related of them that, when on one occasion some children of the Kess tribe, belonging to the neighbouring village of Beit-el-ma, gathered wild anemones that grew in rich profusion on the hill side, and scattered the crimson flowers to the winds, the people of Nablous declared it an insult to their well-known symbol the Anemone; and having gathered a band together, ravaged the country, and sacked the villages of the Kess. The cruel raid on such slight pretext made many a maiden weep and many a widow mourn.

It was from the Samaritans, probably, that Mahomet took his forms of prayer, or they alone may have handed down the old forms of the Jews. This strikes the Eastern wanderer most forcibly while visiting the Samaritan synagogue. In prayer they turn to Mount

Gerizim, on which is the alleged altar of Joshua, as to their *Kiblah;* they hold their hands, bow down the forehead to the earth, touch the tips of their ears, and stroke their beards exactly as the Mahomedans do. It is painfully interesting to watch this most ancient race gradually disappearing, but still through many centuries of reverses and persecutions, even to the present hour, clinging with all the strength and tenacity of a dying grasp to the laws and worship of their fathers.

In the evening my companions arrived, and as I had succeeded in hiring fresh mules, we rode out of the town early the following morning. Passing through a rich valley well watered with clear fast-running brooks, by many fountains, and through groves of apricots, figs and olive trees, before the day was hot we reached the site of the town of ancient Samaria, the Sebaste of Herod. Here we made a short halt. Upon an insulated hill are the remains of a large city. In every direction we see marble, granite, and hard sandstone columns, some standing, some leaning together, and thus kept from falling, while others lie prostrate amidst the waving corn in the most picturesque confusion. One long double row on the rise of the hill probably marks the site of the market-place, and bears witness to the proud

Herod's magnificence. Here was enacted that truly Asiatic scene of tyranny, the murder of Saint John the Baptist, to please a *nautch* girl, and on the summit of the hill, surrounded by a few Arab huts, stand the ruins of a church erected to his memory, evidently, from the style of architecture, built by the Crusaders.

From this point we soon moved on again, winding over spurs of hills, and through fertile valleys, and in the evening reached the valley of Jenin, on the border of the plain of Esdraelon or Megiddo, the great battle-field of nations, where the empire of the world may yet one day be decided. On it we camped for the night, with the mountains of Samaria behind us, and those of Nazareth in advance, with the broad, level, fertile plain stretched between them, some of the wild inhabitants of which kept our little camp on the alert the first part of the night by galloping furiously through it, with the intention, probably, of carrying off our cattle if they broke loose, or anything of which they could lay hold.

Early the following morning we rode across the plain for several miles; the land appeared the richest we had seen in Palestine, and so large and open is the valley, that gazels fed and frisked about in the distance, fearless of the approach of danger. On we

journeyed by Mount Tabor, the hill regarded as the scene of the Transfiguration, and here we gradually ascended the mountains of Nazareth, arriving at the sweet little village itself, on the afternoon of the Tuesday after Easter. It was a holiday, and all the inhabitants, who were principally Christians, were dancing and romping on the village green; so great is the difference between a Christian village festival and the stern, morose Mahomedan meetings. Here the merry maids in loose and graceful garments, with strings of piastres and gold sequins over their braided hair, danced and sung, ran races for oranges and stained eggs, bought of the quaint old vendors on the spot; while others amused themselves with the many rude swings suspended from the old trees. We dismounted and mixed with the gay throng, and certainly never witnessed a more pleasing rural scene. Here no harsh law commanded the use of the veil, and infinitely more modest and graceful the pretty laughing maids appeared without it, as they danced round in a circle to the music of their own wild voices. We had pitched our little camp close by the village fountain, the "Virgin's fountain," as it is called, and doubtless she often drew water at it, delicious clear cold water, gushing from the hill-side, the only spring and favourite water of the village.

At this fountain I witnessed a strange rustic scene. The water flows from a single spout into a stone trough, at which but one pitcher can be filled at a time. From fifty to sixty women and girls were waiting, all struggling to fill their water-pots first, and in the best possible humour vying with each other; but then there were sheep, goats, asses, and every description of cattle, thirsty after a long day's wander over the hills in search of food, all more impatient than their mistresses, and so perfectly tame that no amount of beating or driving would keep them back. When the playful contest amongst them was at its height, and loud peals of laughter announced that one lassie had got more splashed than usual, an old bull came rushing in, pushing the cows right and left, tumbling over the sheep and goats, regardless of a sly kick in the side from a knowing donkey, and fairly took the fountain by storm, while the girls ran screaming up the hill side, and waited till the rustic monarch was satisfied.

I was more delighted with sweet pretty Nazareth than almost any other place in the Holy Land. I felt that I could have given up everything in the world and lived and died here. It is a well-built clean village, situated on the rise of a hill at the head of a rich fat valley surrounded by mountains on all

sides but one. The cool luxuriant foliage, the gay, guileless people, the numerous associations connected with our earliest thoughts and ideas—those child-taught lessons that at times maintain their power over the strongest mind and stormiest feelings—all more or less affect the sojourner at Nazareth. Such influences work on the tenderest chords of the imagination, and dim the eye of the pilgrim as he makes his last visit to the Grotto of the Annunciation, where the Virgin met the Angel, who gave her that awfully mysterious message that made her "blessed among women," or from a seat on the hill to the north, where the wild honeysuckle and heliotrope grow, takes a farewell view of the home of our Redeemer. Here the monks of the Latin convent show many *loca sancta*, and many a holy relic, but to me they could not add to the deep interest felt in the sweet village itself.

After a five hours' ride by a path leading through a beautiful country of hill and dale, we suddenly came in sight of the Sea of Galilee, the Lake of Genesareth. What numerous associations crowd on the memory at the very name. Here lie the remains of Bethsaida; only a few mounds of earth mark the site of the village of Peter, Andrew, and Philip; and again, these scattered ruins, overgrown

with moss and wild-flowers, are supposed to mark Capernaum. Genesareth is a beautiful lake, sixteen or eighteen miles long and from six to seven broad, surrounded by mountains clothed with a wild, luxuriant waste of brushwood. The water is translucent beyond description; not a weed soils its clear gravelly bottom. The day had been hot, and no combination of words could express the luxury of the first plunge into its silvery tide. As long as our people were occupied in pitching the tent, we swam and dived, and chased in careless play the thousands of rainbow-tinted fish that darted about in all directions.

Close to our camp was situated the ancient town of Tiberias, now but a little village surrounded with dilapidated Crusader-looking walls with crumbling turrets and the ruins of a keep. The whole place was shattered some twenty years or more since by an earthquake. Here we halted two days, and visited some of the Jews residing here, for it is one of their four holy cities. A strange mixture of Russians, Spaniards, and Asiatics they are. One had a high reputation for his knowledge of English, and in proof commenced counting one, two, three, till he came to a hundred, when holding out his arms in a grasping attitude, exclaimed, *one hundred pounds!*

This was all he knew; he was proud of it, and looked as if he would have sold his soul to possess the sum. After sunset I strolled out alone, and sat down upon a stone on the beach, and watched the moon rise, shining over the dark blue wavelets that gently rolled over deep Galilee—it was the water the Son of God had walked on!

The following morning we visited some hot alkalescent springs, where there are the remains of baths said to have been built by Solomon. Close to it Ibrahim Pasha, son of Mahomed Ali, and last conqueror of Syria, has built a round stone bath with a dome, still in serviceable order. The water is supposed to possess miraculous powers and mysterious charms, that were related to us by an old Fakeer, who sat like the spirit of the fountain in the midst of the sulphureous vapours, thin and emaciated, with bleared eyes and a grisly beard reaching to the hem of his only garment. He could not persuade us to exchange a swim in the cool sweet waters of the lake for a parboil in the hot stream of the demon spring; but a few piastres changed his curses for our perverseness into a questionable blessing.

On the second morning, after a breakfast of delicious fresh fish from the lake, we departed, and rode for some miles along the shore under a blazing hot

sun, but soon met the cool breeze as we commenced mounting the hills, here excavated in many places for tombs and vaulted catacombs, by whom or when is, not known. Wood, particularly a stunted oak, is more plentiful here than is usual in Syria. Our route lay over an uninhabited country till the shades of evening found us climbing the hill on which Safed is built, round a ruined acropolis, from the top of which there is a magnificent view of the distant Mediterranean, the lake we had left, and the surrounding country, including the hills even of Samaria and Nazareth, with Lebanon's hoary summit in the far background—altogether one of the finest views in Palestine. Safed was the last of the four holy cities of the Jews we had visited, the other three being Jerusalem, Hebron, and Tiberias. It is now a large well-built village of white sandstone, clean and healthy, chiefly in consequence of being naturally well drained.

Next day we rode through a wilderness midst flowering broom and thick brushwood: the path was even more rugged than usual, and both horses and mules had severe falls; but before evening we reached Rameh, the first Druse village we had come to, and camped by a spring under a fine grove of olive-trees. The Druses came out and treated us

hospitably: the men appear generally morose, with frequently a decided expression of ferocity; the women, with metal horns a cubit long on their heads, over which is thrown, in careless negligence, a long white veil that partly enshrouds the person, have white and rosy complexions, as fair, indeed, as ever girl that tripped over English lawn or Highland heath. The following day the road lay for some miles through a gorge, between hills covered with jungle, with beautiful clear streams gushing from clefts high over head. We now gradually descended till about noon, when we reached the large plain of *Acre*, where thoughts of Richard and Saladin's gallant combats crowd fast on the memory.

Here I started many a gazel, and shot a brace of painted partridges, identical with the bird so called in Central Hindostan. But wandering about the high grassy plain, I got separated from the rest of the cavalcade, and became entangled in the swamps and windings of the river Kishon, where the heron is as much left to its solitude as when the chivalry of Christendom hawked along its banks. Here I came upon an old ruined castle, and lay down in the shade of the ivy-covered keep, while my thoughts wandered far back into the past, in quaint dreams of Peter the Hermit and the vast concourse of Crusaders that

were collected here. The most doughty knights of Europe, the most beautiful ladies of its courts, even boys and girls, flocked to the standard of the Cross, and here met, in fierce and desperate conflict, Saladin and his overwhelming hordes. Here, all unsheltered, delicate women bore the fierce heat of the noonday sun, and cold dews at night. Here, upon the weary steed, and leaning on the shoulder of a mailclad knight, they travelled day after day, with barely clothing enough to keep the scorching glare from the fair, softly rounded bosom. But when the scattered, weakened band met the hated Moors that had desecrated the Holy Sepulchre, and the Crusaders charged with deadly onslaught, then with what trembling hope and fear the weaker sex would watch the fight from some rising ground, or cluster of trees, ready to dress the wounds or close the eyes of the fallen! How many of the gay cavalcade here lie beneath the sod—how few returned to their native land!

In the evening we reached Kaiffa, on the shore of the Mediterranean, in which we instantly plunged with all the pleasurable feelings of meeting an old friend. We islanders always, I think, experience this attachment towards the sea, in whatever part of the world we may meet it; perhaps because so many

of us are born and brought up within the sound of the roar of its waves. The following day we halted and walked to the top of Mount Carmel, visited the handsome Latin convent on the summit, and were treated to right good cheer by the hospitable monks, who took us a pleasant stroll over the interesting hill and to the grotto of Elijah.

For five consecutive days after this we rode northwards along the beach, and few rides in the world can afford more interest or aspire to greater beauty. The first place of note at which we arrive is St. Jean d'Acre. We rode to the top of a mound, just outside of the town, overlooking the city, named to this day after Richard Cœur de Lion, and the same on which Napoleon stood and witnessed the veteran soldiers of France hurled back by British bayonets and Mameluke sabres. On this spot met in furious charge the Saracens and Crusaders. The standards of the Cross and Crescent were here locked together in deadly conflict. Here, Sydney Smith turned back the tide that threatened to change the fate of the entire East, the Indian Empire, as well as Constantinople; and there is not one rampart, parapet, or revêtment of the fortification of Acre that does not bear the mark of Charlie Napier. We encamped under the trees by a pretty village called Bussah; all the inhabitants of

which are Maronite Christians. They seemed a fine-looking, well-to-do people; and here again I observed what a marked difference there is between the features of the Christians and the Arab races of Syria, the former showing strong indications of the Crusader blood that probably flows in their veins.

The next day's route lay over the road made by Alexander the Great, cut in the perpendicular face of a precipice of vast height overhanging the sea. The road is without a parapet, and in some places where the rock has fallen down it is very narrow, and as it slopes outwards in such places, the slightest slip or shy of the horse would send his rider down an abyss of many hundred feet. The people of the country call it *Ras-el-Beid*, the white cape, from its being a mass of white tinted rock. We rode on till the almost-forgotten, the once famous Tyre was reached, where now but a few fishermen's huts, standing amidst fallen marble columns and granite pillars, mark the site of one of the earliest cities of the world. Here and there masses of gigantic ruins still crop out of the white sea foam, and the sandy beach is strewed with fragments of richest carvings, while stretching far inland are the ruins of a high arched aqueduct, leading from what the inhabitants call Solomon's

wells, or *Ras-el-ain* (the head of the fountain) which are well worthy of a visit from the passing traveller.

There are here three very ancient wells of an octagon form; the diameter of the largest is sixty-one feet: they are built up some fifteen or twenty feet above the level of the surrounding plain, which is of a light sand, and the water rises on apparently the principle of the Artesian well to the top of the parapet, and overflows into the aqueduct in a great volume of clear water. So great is the stream running from them that it turns the wheels of three mills before reaching the sea, which is about half a mile distant. The wells are of fabulous depth; in the dryest weather the flow from their lips does not cease or even perceptibly diminish, and it is scarcely to be wondered that the Syrians ascribe the whole to enchantment. They believe that Solomon made the genii work for him. Even the Artesian well, then, is not a new invention! the walls or sides of the wells are made of some cement more hard and durable than rock. It is now as perfect as when first built, and no one can tell the date: yet there they have been since Syria was known to Europe! This city of King Hiram must indeed have been most magnificent.

We encamped here under the shelter of some ruins supposed to have been a church built by the

Crusaders, but who can tell? the whole shore, as one rides along, is covered with ruins. It is indeed a very country of ruins, and itself is the greatest ruin of all. Next day we wandered along the beach, and saw the baths or cisterns cut in the living rock, where the far-famed Tyrian dye was made, obtained from a small shell-fish that still abounds during certain months of the year, and yields a rich purple, now used to stain the banners carried by the worshippers at the neighbouring shrine of Sheik Marshook. Here the waves of the sea beat over tessellated pavements with a mournful sound, while the wind sighs gently over prostrate columns and richly carved sarcophagi, formerly the tombs of kings, after a lapse of years wrenched from the once vain dust by the fierce spoiler from the North, and now used by the Arab shepherd as a watering-trough for his sheep.

On we again rode till Sidon was reached, once the rival sister of Tyre, and the queen of early commerce, though now but a small place, every house built with stones from the sculptured ruins that strew the beach. It is still pleasing from the beauty and luxuriance of its gardens. Its oranges and its apricots are deservedly esteemed as some of the finest in Syria, and the forest of fruit-trees are well watered by several clear mountain streams. The remains of

the ancient harbour are replete with interest. On a reef outside, a castle has been built, and though dilapidated, it is still occupied by a handful of Turkish soldiers, and is connected with the town by a stone bridge, of which all the arches differ in span. Along the shore of this bay boats lie safely moored to richly chiselled granite pillars that probably once supported the famed temples of the Sidonians, while on an elevated spot on the shore stand the ruins of a castle built by Louis IX. of France. We spent a day most pleasantly wandering about the old city, the beach, and orchards; and riding a little beyond the ruins, arrived at the Khan of the Prophet Jonah, tradition having decided on this being the spot where Jonah was cast on shore by the fish.

From Sidon, along this coast, there are innumerable small springs and streamlets from the neighbouring hills that thoroughly water the surrounding country, which was now covered with mulberry-trees of a delicate bright green, it being too early in the season to pluck the leaves for the silkworms. We encamped that night on the bank of the Damsur, and entering Beyrout the following morning, were struck by the pleasing view of the town coming from the South. It is well built of stone round the curve of a beautiful bay. Green orchards and gardens abound,

and relieve what would be otherwise the stern aspect of high walls and square towers, while a snow-capped spur of Lebanon makes a bold and picturesque background.

Whether named Baal Beerith after the Phœnician deity, or Colonia Felix Julia, after the daughter of the Roman Emperor Augustus, or Beyrout, probably derived from its more ancient name, it is one of the oldest cities in the world; and though now there is but little of the remains of the great baths, theatres, and temples built by Agrippa, it is still a large flourishing town, and is the sole port of Damascus, and almost of Syria. The number of Franks and hat-wearing individuals living within, as natives of the place, is at first not a little amusing to the old resident in Asia. It is a considerable European colony, the French being the most numerous, who have greatly increased the commerce and importance of the place within the last fifteen or twenty years. Well-built stone houses, with the Asiatic flat roof, are now rising in every direction, particularly in the gardens outside the walls, where all the principal inhabitants reside; indeed, the suburbs are the best part of the town, and a healthy, pleasant place of abode it is.

There is, perhaps, no other city in the world with

such an admixture of races as Beyrout. In any society one may enter, several languages are sure to be spoken. There could be no better school for becoming a good colloquial linguist, and almost every one, particularly the ladies of this part of the Levant, speak daily five or six languages. This mixture of races makes the cafés, bazaars, and streets very entertaining; and in an evening lounge one is certain to meet English, French, Germans, Americans, Italians, Maltese, Greeks, and Turks; merchants from Aleppo, Damascus, and Antioch; Jews from every part of the world—Maronite Christians the most numerous of all; Druses and Metualis from Mount Lebanon; Arnouts, Arabs, Hubshees, and Nubian slaves.

The greater number of the people resident outside of the town are engaged more or less in the production or preparation of silk, which forms the principal staple of export. Amongst them, in a mulberry garden, I hired a comfortable little house, and saw much of the people during a short residence. They speak Arabic, the language of Syria, and are for the most part Maronite Christians. They seem intelligent, make good writers, and are generally more attached to office work than any of the other native races. In complexion they are fair, and

have generally good features. They hold as nearly as possible the same position with the European consuls and merchants as the wealthy classes of Bengalees do in Calcutta, but with this difference, that their families are not so much estranged.

Beyrout can boast of no public amusement beyond its cafés, some of which are good, and assume the name of hotels. In the hottest weather there are great blocks of hard compact snow brought from the highest peaks of Lebanon, a liberal supply of which is given with the deservedly popular *moiya zubeel*, and different kinds of sherbet and lemonade, sold in numerous little stalls or shops through the bazaar. For the greater part of the year, however, the climate is cool, while even the hot weather is tempered by the fresh sea-breeze which sets in every afternoon. A few hours' ride will at any time transport one to the mountains of Lebanon, where almost any moderate climate may be chosen, as it simply depends on the elevation of the village selected as a temporary home.

I must not conclude without observing that our Government are at present very fortunate in their choice of a consul-general, who holds here nearly the position of a resident at an Indian court, with the difference that all matters of dispute are made

infinitely more intricate and difficult of solution by the presence of French, Russian, and Austrian consuls-general. Mr. Moore possesses a fortunate combination of the *suaviter in modo* with the *fortiter in re*, which usually crowns his acts with success, and materially assists to make Beyrout a most agreeable residence.

CHAPTER XIV.

JOURNEY HOME.

Departure for Alexandria—Cholera Morbus—Crowded Decks of the Steamer—Longing for Shore—Quarantine under the Yellow Flag—Arrival of the Steamer from England—Appeal to the Turkish Officials—A Swim ashore contemplated—The Quarantine Office—An Arab on Guard—A Doctor astonished—Breaking Quarantine—Flight and Pursuit—An Alexandrian Rabble—Disappointed Rage—Fearful Ride through the Desert—Unexpected Help—Bound for the far East.

For six months I had been a sojourner in Syria, and now, after a second visit to Damascus and the neighbouring deserts, and a short residence among the Mountain tribes, I left Beyrout, and soon arrived off Alexandria in an Austrian steamer. Cholera morbus at this time was ravaging the whole of the Levant, and it was worse on the Egyptian coast than in any other place; as silent, as deadly, as horror-striking, as the great scourge of Eastern cities—the plague in its worst days. The deck of our little vessel was crowded with men, women, and children, Christians, Mahomedans, and Jews, Greeks, Turks, and Caireens, all huddled together, save

where a bit of rope or chalked line showed but the failure of the ever-attempted separation between the opposing creeds. Here, all on deck squatted together day and night—just a narrow street kept clear down the centre for the officers of the ship and the one cabin passenger. Here they all ate, drank, and slept; and as they were not expected to assert their natural right to walk about, it was well they did not wish it. The grizzle-bearded Turk, trying to soothe himself with the ever ready pipe, looked disdainfully round him; but he had never walked for the sake of walking, why should he do it now? The fat wife of the Tripoli sugar vendor, in the very loud trowsers, dreadfully soiled with being slept in for two nights, trying to soothe a teething infant at her breast, what could she get by moving but the loss of a few inches of that spot on the deck that she so wrangled for last night, and has now barricaded with a roll of bedding and two suspicious-looking water-pots? And that slender, undulating form in vestment of lilac cloth and soft furs, closely veiled in ever so many folds of dark-coloured muslin, and nearly hid behind the old woman in scarlet, that perhaps never before was outside the walls of the harem, how *could she* walk about?

But don't they—don't we all long to get on shore?

Yes: even though by a merciful Providence we were free from epidemic, and the Angel of Death hovered over the city of Alexander. We longed the more to get away, because we had been now anchored several hours, and our clean bill of health had not yet procured us *pratique*. Few would suppose that the tainted populace of the already scourged city could dread contagion from us; but well I knew how usually the Mahomedan's acts and thoughts are directly opposed to our ideas; and with good reason we dreaded a long quarantine in a crowded lazaretto or ship, under a burning sun, and in a tainted air.

I was now on my way back to our Indian empire; the steamer from Southampton, with the passengers and mail for India, was daily expected; the chance of being detained in quarantine while the new arrivals passed through Egypt, the idea of having to run the gauntlet for a fortnight, of cholera of the most malignant type, during the worst time of the year, was, to say the least of it, not pleasant to contemplate. Yet, with this conviction, a second day passed, and a third was on the wane, while we lay blistering in the sun, with the yellow flag, the emblem of infection, still fluttering over head. We had not even the consolation of knowing how long we

might have to wait for *pratique;* the lazy Mahomedan appeared to have forgotten us altogether.

At length my feelings were strung to the highest pitch by seeing the Peninsular and Oriental Company's steamer arrive with the passengers from England, on their way to India. As they all landed at once, I despatched letters that evening, though with much difficulty, to the Turk in-charge of the quarantine, to the Pasha, and every sort of official I could remember, expressing my earnest desire to be permitted to go on through Egypt with the English passengers. Notwithstanding all this, night fell and no reply arrived, nor was any other notice taken of my communications.

I was determined I would not spend a fortnight in Egypt awaiting the next Eastern mail—bad enough in the diseased town; but how much worse if I should have to pass it in close confinement between the discoloured walls of a lazaretto, blazing hot, and reeking with the effluvia of cholera-stricken patients—any risk was preferable. When it was dark, therefore, and the lazaretto officers seemed least on the alert, I slipped quietly down the ship's side, felt the temperature of the water, and for a minute contemplated a swim. But the nearest shore was the quarantine harbour, and that was a good mile

off. Even if I swam round it, what should I do—where should I go, when I reached the shore? I was considering the risks and chances, and had divested myself of my coat, and, with one hand in the water, watched the current, when I was startled by a voice close to my ear, that proceeded from a small port-hole—the accent was broad Scotch: "Don't try it, sir, you'll never make the shore; and if you did, the blackguards would shoot you." I had not heard a word of English for many days. I felt at once less lonely, and my spirits revived as the speaker joined me, and we sat down and had a long talk over my difficulties. My acquaintance proved to be the engineer of the little steamer, and a very intelligent, agreeable fellow. Little comfort he had to offer me, indeed, for he rather confirmed my fears about the number of days we might be kept in quarantine.

The following morning, acting upon the engineer's advice, I induced the lazaretto servants to take me to the head of their department on shore, determining in my own mind not to return. We reached a narrow wooden pier, along which they guided me into a filthy, wretched prison, the door of which was locked behind, while further progress was barred by a strong wooden rail. Here I was left sitting on a

bench for an hour before any one came to speak to me, watched by an Arab sentry, who sat on his heels and amused himself by "cracking" on the stock of his musket the captives made during an amazingly successful forage under his wearing apparel.

At last a little doctor, half French, half Egyptian, made his appearance. He was not civil, and I fear I was rather impatient: he certainly thought me so. After much explanation on my part and excuses on his, he at last agreed to refer the matter to higher authority; but for this reference I waited a long time in vain, and was at last told that I must accept a room in the lazaretto. I lost all patience; and on the bar in front being removed by one of the servants, I pushed past him, rushing up to where the doctor was seated, and took hold of him by the arm. He started up, and shrinking back, called out —"Hold! hold! You compromise me!"

"Ha!" said I; "you took my remaining in quarantine very coolly!"

The doctor retiring backwards, with his arms extended, roared out, in mixed French and Arabic, to his myrmidons, "Hold him! Seize him!"

I received a heavy blow from behind, which made my eyes dazzle, and a sickening vision of yellow flags, swollen corpses, and cholera spectres, for half

a second flashed through my brain. But the blow was all that was wanting to make my blood boil; All sense of right and wrong was then forgotten. I had a tough bamboo cane in my hand, and down went my assailant. The frightened doctor fell with a very slight push, and as I dashed on, the road was quickly cleared before me. The outside of the enclosure was quickly gained; but a host of hooting slaves, armed with anything they could lay hold of, followed close on my heels.

No time was now to be lost. Several boys held their donkeys, ready saddled, in the shade of the Lazaretto wall. In an instant I had pushed one aside and vaulted into the saddle; and surely never donkey was so driven. Urged by my stick, he dashed along the dusty glaring road, closely followed by the shouting, demoniac rabble that seemed to gain strength and increase in rage as they came along.

The railway station was soon in sight. There I trusted to find assistance, and still hoped to meet the usual hundred or more English passengers. I urged the donkey with both stick and rein to increase the distance between myself and pursuers; but only reached the then half-finished station to find that the passengers had all departed. Not a

soul was to be seen but a few Arab workmen; and again the din of the roaring multitude, following fast in the rear, proved the extremity I was in.

I sprang from the donkey, and rushed through the open buildings to the point where the rail commenced; and here fortune seemed to favour me. An engine, with the steam up, had just returned from the other end of the line, which at this time only reached to the western branch of the hill. An English engineer was alone on it. I rushed to him, jumped on the engine, and in a word told him the danger I was in—amply proved by the shouts and yells of rage of the tumultuous crowd that had now again just sighted me, and seemed desirous to tear me limb from limb.

There were Egyptian soldiers in their dirty white uniform and red tarbush, Arab fellahs in striped ubâee and dirty skull-caps; boatmen in well-worn bralded jackets; donkey-boys in blue shirts without trowsers, and even women in their blue shirts with trowsers; some with sticks, a soldier or two with muskets, others with stones, all covered with dust, hooting and howling like demons let loose from the lower regions. I turned to the engine-driver—pointed to the fast approaching rabble, and said, "Drive on!—here's gold for you!" He clutched it with a strange leer

that I afterwards remembered—and put on the steam. Puff! puff! puff! went the escaping vapour; round went the wheels, and with a shrill shriek on we moved—faster and faster—but not too soon; for the crowd disappointed of their prey were already up. Vainly they attempted to stop the mighty engine—and a yell of passion accompanying a shower of stones and dirt was all the revenge they could get. On we sped; the motley group was left far in the rear. The pace increases as we pass the green environs of the town and the salt lake—faster and faster as we open out into the broad desert; the heat of the increased fire is great. There is a bright glare of sun overhead, our wheels fly round and smoke as if they were going to blaze up; but the wind raised by the fearful pace we were going at was like the simoom of an Arabian desert: faster and faster, more awful is the pace, till the brain reels and the massive engine itself sways to and fro, as if it would fly off the rail. The vast expanse of reddish sand looks like a sea of fire. What can now be the use of this fearsome race?

I looked at the driver and said, "Pray, check this speed—I cannot breathe?" But he hears or heeds me not. I look again at that purple face, and at those blood-shot eyes. My God! he is drunk, or in a fit!

I knew nothing of driving an engine, but I tried to turn off the steam: I was roughly pushed aside with an oath. The grinding noise, the rush of steam and wind, the pace through the air, were maddening. The desire of preserving my life was strong—the line of rail was not long—how or where it ended I could not guess; my nerves had been wrought to the highest pitch that day.

For a second, the thought of hurling the driver off the engine shot through my brain! It was but for an instant—the next, my senses had sufficiently recovered to admit of further reflection. Leaning with my back to the rail, and grasping it with one arm, I looked my companion in the face. He was watching mine, and seemed to be aware of the thought that had just flashed through my head. I stood still; watched his blood-shot, watery eye, and awaited the result!

Something attracted the man's attention a-head, and turning, I saw a white, unusual speck in the lone desert. As we neared it at our fearful speed, it proved to be a tent, and there were two Europeans in it. They halloo out, I think. My fiend charioteer, at any rate, is roused; he shuts off the steam, but the pace has been so fearful, the motive power so great, that we shoot a long way a-head of the

small encampment. However, they see something is wrong, and following us, one of the Europeans takes charge of the engine, and brings us back to the tent.

It turned out that these were a party of engineers, with workmen at their command, laying the rail. I hardly need say they received me hospitably, and that one of them took me on to the Nile, when I found that the baggage steamer had not yet started. I got on board, and landed safely the following morning at Cairo.

The greater number of the Indian passengers had been sent on in the caravans, across the desert to Suez; but I was most fortunate in meeting a gentleman and his wife, who had received from the Pasha a separate carriage with four horses. Most kindly and liberally this gentleman offered me a seat in his carriage; and after an agreeable halt for one night at the half-way house, we got on board one of the Peninsular and Oriental Company's splendid fleet at Suez, and in a few hours we were steaming down the Red Sea, bound for the far—far East.

THE END.

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